

AN INVENTORY OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

within the

ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN CANAL NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

1986

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| Volume I: | Overviews of the Historic Architecture of Peru, LaSalle, Utica, Ottawa, Marseilles, and Seneca |
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Volume II: Peru: Inventory of Historic Structures

Volume III: LaSalle: Inventory of Historic Structures

Volume IV: Utica: Inventory of Historic Structures

Volume V: Ottawa: Inventory of Historic Structures

**Volume VI: Marseilles and Seneca: Inventory of
Historic Structures**

HABS/HAER Division

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

VOLUME I

OVERVIEWS OF THE HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE OF

PERU, LASALLE, UTICA, OTTAWA, MARSEILLES, AND SENECA

Historic American Buildings Survey/
Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1986

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the summer of 1986 the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HAES/HAER) Division of the National Park Service completed its second year of a multi-year survey of historic structures in the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. This survey work, being done in accordance with the legislation that created the Heritage Corridor, has as its main focus the historic buildings in the cities and towns located along the Illinois and Michigan Canal, as well as the historic industry, transportation, and engineering works located along the length of the canal.

The historic structures survey is the first step in identifying historically and architecturally significant resources. It forms the basic data for the overview histories which in turn permit the evaluation of individual structures in a local, regional, and national context. The survey also identifies resources meriting further documentation and those threatened with demolition or destruction. In addition, the HAES/HAER survey work will aid planners interested in restoration or rehabilitation, and provide basic documentation for interpretive exhibits, brochures, and other educational materials. Providing a permanent record of nationally significant historic resources, the HAES/HAER documentation produced in the Heritage Corridor will be deposited in the Library of Congress and at the headquarters of the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission in Lockport, Illinois.

In 1986, six towns were surveyed for historical and architectural significance by HAES/HAER. This volume contains the overview histories of each town, which describe the survey boundaries, place the inventory in its historical context, analyze the buildings inventoried, and provide recommendations. In Chapter I, the general methodology and rating system are explained. Volumes II through VI of this report are comprised of the 725 inventory cards of the structures that were surveyed. Other volumes in this series include the inventory cards of the industrial and engineering structures along the canal that were surveyed in 1985 and 1986.

CREDITS

In 1986, for the second consecutive year, the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) Division of the National Park Service conducted a survey of historic structures in the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. This report of the survey was prepared by HABS/HAER, Robert J. Kapsch, Chief. Sally K. Tompkins, Deputy Chief, developed the work plan for the Heritage Corridor survey, Gray Fitzsimons, HAER Historian, served as project manager, and Alison K. Hoagland, HABS Historian, served as editor of this report.

The historic structures survey of the Heritage Corridor was funded by the National Park Service Midwest Regional Office, Division of Cultural Resources, Francis A. Ketterson, Jr., Chief. James T. O'Toole, Superintendent of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield, Illinois, served as project manager for the Midwest Office and Friday Wiles, Administrative Assistant at the Lincoln Home NHS, provided logistical support.

The HAES summer survey team was supervised in the field by Elizabeth A. Miller, a graduate student in planning at the University of Florida. The historians included Sara Leach, University of Virginia; Donna M. Neary, Loyola University; Rachel D. Barber, Lawrence University; Marguerite S. Shaffer, University of Pennsylvania; Mary M. Stolberg, University of Virginia; and Mary J. Turner, University of Georgia. Deborah A. Fulton, of the University of Virginia, worked in the HABS/HAER office during the summer and also served as an historian on the survey project.

The draft for this report, which contains overviews for each of the survey areas, was prepared by the HAES team. The team was divided up as follows:

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Peru: | F.L. Miller, M.M. Stolberg, R.D. Barber |
| LaSalle: | S.A. Leach, M.J. Turner |
| Utica: | M.S. Shaffer, D.M. Neary |
| Utica Township: | M.S. Shaffer, D.M. Neary |
| Ottawa: | R.D. Barber, M.J. Turner |
| Marseilles: | M.S. Shaffer, D.M. Neary |
| Seneca: | D.A. Fulton |

Typing support for the HABS/HAER cards and the report was very capably and graciously provided by Tammy D. Washington and Olayinka F. Smith.

And finally, special thanks to Lee Hansen, Executive Director, I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission; David Carr, Superintendent, I & M Canal State Park; Edmund Thornton, Chairman, Ottawa Silica Foundation; Gerald Adelman, Executive Director, Upper Illinois Valley Association; and Donald Baker, Mayor, Peru, Illinois.

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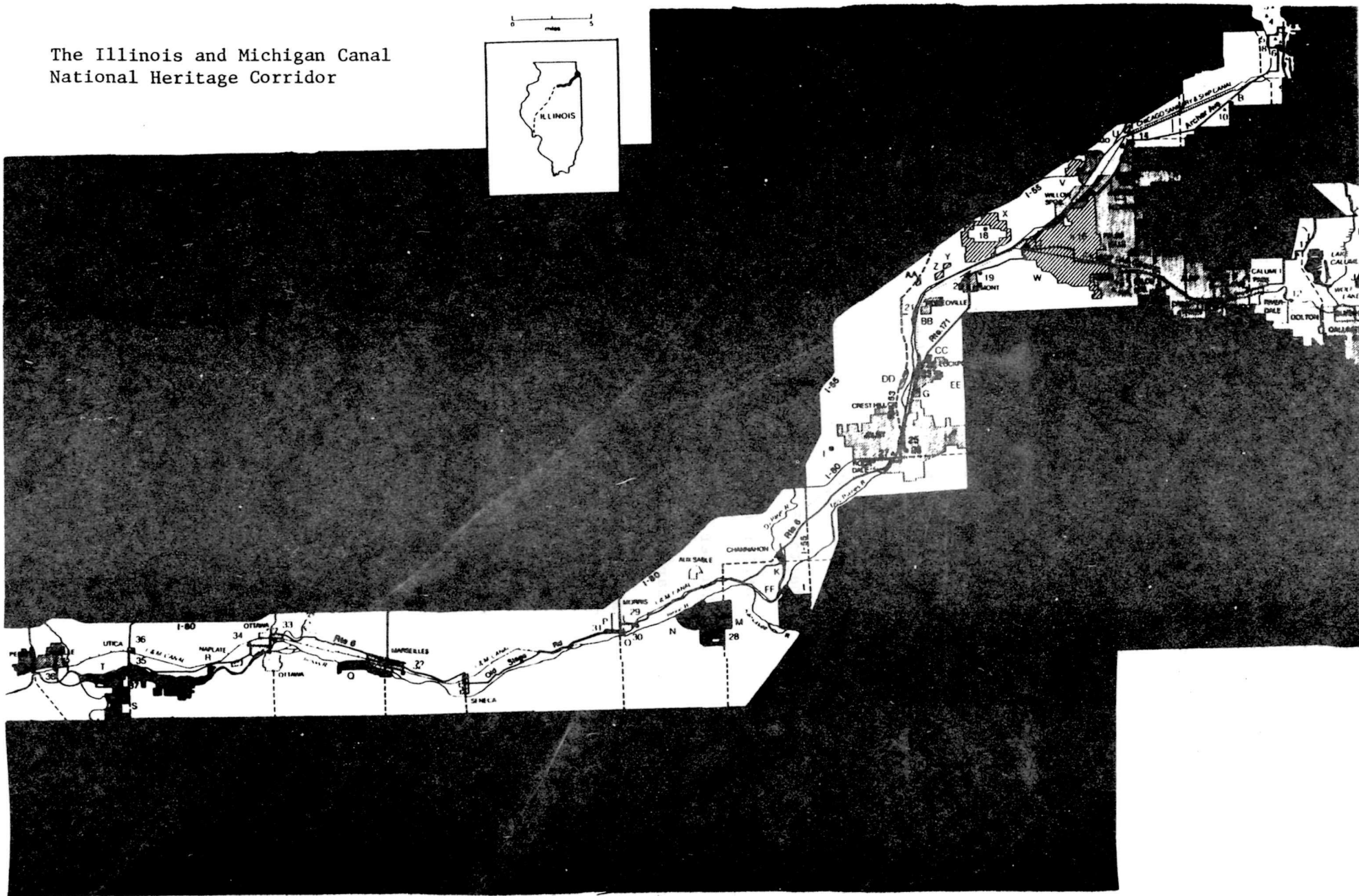
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The Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Praising the natural and man-made landscape of the Upper Illinois Valley shortly after the State-owned Illinois & Michigan Canal opened in 1848, a traveler wrote, "The combination of these singular and varied features of nature and art at this point -- rugged bluffs, gentle slopes, shady vales, fertile, cultivated prairies, and dashing streams, with the smooth, regular, and walled Canal -- altogether render this one of the most delightful locations for the healthy atmosphere and beautiful prospects on the whole route from Chicago to St. Louis."* Such unbridled enthusiasm for the valley's resources was voiced in other mid-nineteenth-century gazetteers, all of which underscored the potential for commercial, industrial, and agricultural development. Many of these prospects were realized in the 1850s as settlement in the earliest platted canal towns increased dramatically.

The impetus for this rapid expansion was the presence of the I & M Canal followed by the completion of three major railroads, the Chicago & Rock Island, the Illinois Central, and the Chicago, Alton, & St. Louis, by the mid 1850s. The towns that benefitted most from this growth were located along the I & M Canal, a waterway extending 96 miles from Chicago to LaSalle-Peru, Illinois. Numbering slightly more than a dozen, the canal towns burgeoned between 1850 and 1870, and continued to experience steady gains in population throughout the late nineteenth century. The most spectacular of these cities was, of course, Chicago, which by 1870 had become the Midwest's pre-eminent city. But even outside of Chicago a number of towns, including Joliet, Ottawa, and LaSalle-Peru, emerged as important regional centers of commerce, industry, and agriculture.

The period from 1848 to 1933, during which time the I & M was in operation, witnessed the construction of many residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, ecclesiastical, and public buildings, in and around the canal towns. A diversity of architecture, from modest vernacular structures to internationally-acclaimed skyscrapers, emerged in the Upper Illinois Valley.

After 1933, much of the canal became a state park, and a renewed interest in the area in the late 1970s led to the designation of the I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor. Signed into law by President Reagan in August 1984, the Act creating the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor was designed to "retain, enhance, and interpret, for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the cultural, historic, natural, recreational and economic resources of the corridor, where feasible, consistent with industrial and economic growth."** The Heritage Corridor's boundaries are larger than the canal itself, including land which due to the canal has long since been developed into private industries, commercial centers, residential neighborhoods, and farms.

* Daniel S. Curtiss, Western Portraiture and Emigrant's Guide (New York, 1852), p. 63.

**U.S. Congress, "Public Law 98-398," 98th Congress, August 24, 1984.

Included in the legislation was a directive to the Secretary of the Interior calling for an inventory of historic resources within the Heritage Corridor. To carry out this mandate the Midwest Regional Office of the National Park Service in conjunction with the Commission contracted with the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) Division for the survey of the Heritage Corridor's historic structures.

THE SURVEY

Previous survey work in the Heritage Corridor had been limited in scope. The State of Illinois, Department of Conservation, undertook a windshield survey of towns in LaSalle, Grundy, and Will counties in the early and mid 1970s. Although the State survey identified a few of the Upper Illinois Valley's significant buildings, many of the region's important historical and architectural resources remained unknown. Further survey work was done in 1979 when the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) studied the historic buildings in the central business district of Lockport. One other National Park Service study, completed in 1981, was published as a conceptual planning report on the I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor and contained a list of all previously identified historic resources. But apart from the work of HAER in Lockport, no comprehensive survey had been undertaken along the I & M Canal outside of Chicago.

In the summer of 1985, HABS/HAER conducted surveys in three areas within the Heritage Corridor. The first survey area, the historic canal town of Morris, was the site of the largest survey effort. Covering virtually the entire central business district, HABS/HAER inventoried 115 commercial, public, and religious buildings in downtown Morris along with 229 residential buildings located in the earliest platted parts of the town. The second survey area consisted of the HAER survey along the I & M Canal. It was begun in LaSalle-Peru and reached as far as Ottawa. Nearly 120 industrial sites and engineering works were inventoried. Lastly, the third survey area was that of the central business district of Lemont in Cook County. About 110 commercial, public, and religious buildings were inventoried. The overview histories and results of each area of the survey may be found in An Inventory of Historic Structures Within the Illinois and Michigan Canal.

In the summer of 1986, the HAER survey of industrial and engineering sites was completed, covering the canal from Ottawa to Chicago. Also in 1986, HABS/HAER focused on the historic central business districts in Peru, LaSalle, Utica, Ottawa, Marseilles, and Seneca. Additionally, Utica Township was selected for a survey of historic farm buildings. These architectural surveys are the subject of this report.

GENERAL METHODOLOGY

Site Selection: The six canal towns that were the subject of the 1986 survey were all in the western end of the canal corridor. Although virtually no buildings were found that dated from the early years of the I & M, the building stock of the six towns predominantly dates from the late nineteenth century. The towns flourished at this time primarily because of the canal and rail systems which encouraged trading and shipping, especially of agricultural products.

Due to the constraints of time and resources, only parts of each of these towns could be surveyed, and the central business districts were selected. In general, these areas often embody the identified character of a town and have the most elaborate buildings, representing the financial success stemming from the existence of the canal and railroads. These areas often correspond to the original town plats, although many of the existing structures replaced the original buildings. The boundaries of the survey area in each town are explained in each overview chapter, and a map is included.

In addition, the I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor has a rich collection of farm buildings, the extent of which makes it impossible to survey in one summer. Instead, it was decided to survey a sample of these rural resources, and Utica Township was selected because this area had experienced little change since about the 1920s. Within that one township, every building erected prior to the Second World War was surveyed. Because the purpose of the survey was to identify structures for preservation and further documentation, all of the survey work concentrated on existing buildings which were constructed before 1940. Little attempt was made to collect information on demolished structures, and historical archeology was not a component of this survey.

Archival research: The archival research was undertaken concurrently with the fieldwork. Secondary sources, particularly county histories and commemorative local histories, were consulted; these are listed in the bibliography, below. The Sanborn Real Estate Insurance atlases were particularly helpful. Produced approximately every decade beginning in about 1888, the maps indicate building shape, dimensions, height, materials, and, occasionally, uses. Comparison of one map to another provides approximate construction and alteration dates. A full set is available at the Library of Congress. Unfortunately, only the downtown and industrial areas are usually covered by these atlases. For the Utica Township survey, plat maps were consulted. In all cases, city directories, usually housed in the local library, were used to identify occupants. The agricultural censuses were particularly useful for the Utica Township Survey.

In addition to these most useful sources, a host of others were consulted. Newspapers, and newspaper clippings, historic photographs and drawings, and bird's-eye views were all used. The local history collections of each public library, although they varied widely in quality and quantity, were the fundamental sources. Oral interviews with older residents and local historians provided additional information.

Fieldwork: Each building within the survey area was examined and a photograph was taken. The field inspection was usually limited to the exterior, and often to the front, or what could be seen from the public right-of-way. A description was written, using terminology from the following sources:

Gottfried, Herbert, and Jan Jennings. American Vernacular Design, 1870-1949: An Illustrated Glossary. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

The photography was in 35 mm black and white. A xerox of the contact print is found on each inventory card, and the original contact sheets and negatives are stored in the Library of Congress.

Report Writing: Two written products resulted from the survey: the overview reports, found in this volume, and the individual inventory cards, found in volumes 2-6. The inventory cards contain the following information: name, address, date of construction, original and current uses, rating (explained below), condition, description, history, significance, sources, and a photograph.

Using this data and other research, an overview report was written. This contains a brief history of the town in order to put the surveyed buildings in context. The overview then focuses on the history of the area that was surveyed -- usually the central commercial district -- and briefly analyzes the architecture.

EVALUATION

The development of a system for evaluating and categorizing the historical and architectural qualities of each inventoried resource was a product of the 1985 survey, and that same system of categorization was used again here. The categorization was done with the aim of establishing a numerical measure of importance as seen in the larger context of all the Heritage Corridor's historic structures. Before discussing the format of this system, two major points must be addressed. First, by its very subjective nature, the quantifying of historical and architectural values for historic resources remains open to wide interpretation. There is no exact scientific means for rating numerically, or in any other way, the significance of historic properties. For this reason, the ratings assigned to each inventoried structure are but one of several factors that should be examined in assessing the structure's importance and future role in the Heritage Corridor. Insofar as the HABS/HAER inventory cards are used, the architectural descriptions and statements of significance must be considered as well. The main function of the numerical rating is to indicate in a general way the relative importance of each structure to all others in the Heritage Corridor.

The system developed by HABS/HAER for rating the historical and architectural qualities of each inventoried structure in the Heritage Corridor contains three parts: historical themes and their importance to the Corridor's history; the historical, architectural or technological importance of the individual resource within its related theme(s); and the physical qualities of the resource.

Part I. Historical Themes

The first part, historical themes of the Heritage Corridor, is derived from those themes outlined in a recent National Park Service study of the I & M Canal.* These themes include immigration and settlement, transportation, commerce, agriculture, manufacturing and industry, labor, politics and government, social history, art and culture, and recreation. As will be discussed below, each of these historical themes, depending on the time period involved, possesses varying degrees of importance to two of the Heritage Corridor's primary historical resources, the I & M Canal and the early railroads. For example, the immigration and settlement theme as reflected in an 1840s residential building would likely have more historical importance to the canal than the same theme as reflected in a 1930s bungalow. This is due to the fact that immigration and settlement in the Upper Illinois River Valley during the 1840s was, by and large, more closely linked with the I & M Canal than was 1930s immigration and settlement in the canal corridor. An outline of the major historical themes and summary explanations for assigning the various levels of importance to each theme are contained in Table 1-1.

HABS/HAER established a four-point scoring system to indicate the theme's relative importance to the Heritage Corridor. The most important themes were assigned a score of three, the moderately important themes were assigned a score of two, the themes with minor importance were assigned a score of one, and the themes relating to the post-1940, or non-historic period, were assigned a score of zero.

*A. Berle Clemensen, Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, Illinois: Historical Inventory, History, and Significance (Denver, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1985).

TABLE 1-1

| <u>HISTORICAL THEME</u> | <u>SCORE</u> | <u>EXPLANATION</u> |
|---|--------------|--|
| Transportation: | | |
| Transportation Waterways, c. 1830 - 1933 (Tw): | 3 | The historic (pre-1940) structures of the I&M Canal reflect this theme. The I&M was built between 1836 and 1848; the last operating section closed in 1933. Such structures as locks, aqueducts, culverts, toll houses, locktenders' houses, and canal houses are but a few examples. |
| Transportation Waterways, c. 1890 - 1933 (Tw): | 3 | The historic structures of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (built 1890-1901), Cal-Sag Channel (built 1911-1921), and the Illinois Waterway (built 1921-1933) are also included in this theme. |
| Transportation Railways, c. 1850 - 1870 (Tr): | 3 | The historic structures of Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific RR, Chicago, Alton & St. Louis RR are included in this theme. All of these lines were constructed through the Heritage Corridor in the 1850s. Bridges, tunnels, freight and passenger stations, and locomotive shops are but a few examples. |
| Transportation Railways, 1871 - 1940 (Tn): | 2 | Later 19th-century railroads including Chicago, Burlington & Quincy RR, Chicago, St. Louis Western RR, and Elgin, Joliet & Eastern RR are part of this theme. |

HISTORICAL THEMESCOREEXPLANATION

Transportation, (cont'd.)

Transportation Railways--
Interurban Lines,
c. 1890 - 1940 (Ti):

3

Interurban lines constructed in the corridor in the late-19th and early 20th centuries represent an important era of transportation in the Heritage Corridor.

Transportation Highways,
c. 1830 - 1870 (Th):

3

This theme is reflected in the Heritage Corridor's bridges, trestles, and culverts. Those structures spanning the I&M that were built during the canal's construction or operation (1836-1933) comprise a theme of major historical importance. Similarly, so do the early 1830s to 1860s bridges located within the Heritage Corridor.

Transportation Highways,
1871 - 1940 (Tv):

2

Vehicular bridges that were built within the Heritage Corridor (though not crossing the I&M) during the 1870s-1930s period comprise a theme of moderate historical importance.

Transportation Highways,
post-1940 (Tp):

0

Any post-1940 bridge built within the Heritage Corridor (including those crossing the I&M) is considered non-historic.

Commerce:

Commerce, 1830 - 1870
(Ce):

3

This theme is reflected in such commercial buildings as general stores, hotels, saloons, and banks constructed during the antebellum and Civil War periods. Commercial establishments dating from these times generally had close ties to the I&M and early railroads.

Commerce, 1871 - 1900
(Cm):

2

The late 19th century was a period of heavy industrialization within the Heritage Corridor.

HISTORICAL THEMESCOREEXPLANATION

Commerce (cont'd.)

The majority of the commercial buildings in the canal towns date from this period through the early 20th century. This era, though a time of decline for the I&M, was when the commercial centers of the canal towns grew most dramatically. Many of the Heritage Corridor's commercial buildings were erected during the 1870s and 1880s.

Commerce, 1901 - 1940
(Cn):

1

The last two decades of the 19th century saw the decline of the I&M Canal. Shortly after the turn of the century only the Joliet to LaSalle section of remained in operation. The canal towns, however, continued to grow. During the relatively prosperous 1920s, commercial areas grew. The great depression of the 1930s marked a decline in commerce throughout the Heritage Corridor. Very few commercial buildings were erected in the canal towns during this period.

Commerce, post-1940 (Cr):

0

This theme is considered non-historic for the post-1940 years.

Manufacturing &
Industry:

Manufacturing & Industry,
1830 - 1940 (Me):

3

The antebellum and Civil War-era industries located within the Heritage Corridor were closely linked to the I&M and the early railroads. These early industrial concerns were mostly small in scale; however, many of them expanded as heavy industry arrived in the Heritage Corridor in the late-19th century.

HISTORICAL THEMESCOREEXPLANATION

Manufacturing & Industry (cont'd,)

The late 19th century was a period of heavy industrialization within the Heritage Corridor. The railroads assumed supremacy over the canal during this time. Although the I&M continued to transport raw materials, the manufacturing and industrial concerns relied largely on the railroads. Industries tended to locate along the rail corridors. The exception to this was the paper-making and flour mills which, utilizing the canal water, were located at the Lockport and Ottawa hydraulic basins up until the early 20th century.

Manufacturing & Industry,
post-1940 (Mr):

0

The manufacturing and industry theme as reflected in post-1940 factories and industrial sites is considered non-historic.

Agriculture:

Agriculture, c. 1830 - 1870
(Ae):

3

Most importantly, the I&M Canal and the early railroads provided farmers with the means of transporting their grain, produce, and livestock. Relatively large volumes of grain were shipped on the I&M until the 1880s. Such agriculture-related structures as farmhouses, barns, feed stores, and grain elevators are included in this theme.

Agriculture, 1871 - 1930
(Am):

2

The number of farms within the Heritage Corridor continued to grow until the 1880s. Farmers formed cooperatives and waged campaigns to regulate railroad rates. The I&M remained a means for shipping grain and numerous grain elevators were constructed along the canal. Throughout much

HISTORICAL THEMESCOREEXPLANATION

Agriculture (cont'd.)

of this period, however, the railroads received the lion's share of the grain traffic. Again, the many farmhouses, barns, and various agricultural structures erected during these decades are included in this theme.

Agriculture, post-1940
(Ar):

0

The agriculture theme as reflected in post-1940 farm and farm-related structures is considered non-historic.

Immigration, Settlement &
Residential Development:

Immigration, Settlement &
Residential Development,
c. 1830 - 1870 (Se):

3

Irish, German and English were the largest European immigrant groups to settle in the Heritage Corridor during the antebellum period. Many of the native-born American settlers came from New England, New York, and Atlantic States. Also, a large number of Canadians settled in the region prior to the Civil War. Many of the immigrants, chiefly the Irish, came in the 1830s and 1840s to work on the I&M. Following completion of the canal in 1848, and with the coming of the railroads in the 1850s, population in the region grew. The theme of immigration, settlement, and residential development is of course reflected in the Heritage Corridor's many residential buildings.

Immigration, Settlement &
Residential Development,
c. 1871 - 1920 (Sm):

2

With the advent of heavy industry in the late-19th century, a new wave of immigrants, many of whom came from southern and eastern Europe, settled in the Heritage Corridor. The neighborhoods where

HISTORICAL THEMESCOREEXPLANATION

Immigration, Settlement, and
Residential Development (cont'd.)

they lived contributed greatly to the region's rich cultural variety. In addition, many Americans, including blacks from the South, settled in the towns and cities of the Upper Illinois River Valley during the late 19th and early-20th centuries. Apart from the new arrivals to the region, second and third generations of the early settlers continued to build residential structures in the Heritage Corridor.

Immigration, Settlement,
and Residential Development,
1921 - 1940 (Sn): 1

As with the rest of the nation, the canal towns in the Heritage Corridor underwent a great deal of change during the period 1920 to 1940. New residential building accompanied the relatively prosperous 1920s. Although immigration from abroad decreased substantially, a more mobile American people moved into the Upper Illinois River Valley in larger numbers. The theme of immigration, settlement, and residential development is reflected in the many apartment buildings, bungalows, and cottages erected during this time. Although the great depression of the 1930s curtailed further growth of the canal towns, limited residential construction still occurred.

Immigration, Settlement,
and Residential Development,
post-1940 (Sr): 0

The immigration, settlement, and residential development theme as reflected in post-1940 residential buildings is considered non-historic.

HISTORICAL THEMESCOREEXPLANATION

Politics & Government:

Politics & Government,
c. 1830 - 1870 (Pe):

3

Federal, state and local politics were an important factor in the struggle to build the I&M. From the 1820s through the 1840s, debate was vigorously waged over public funding of the canal and the role of the state and Federal Government in directing internal improvements. Political careers rose and fell with the fortunes of the canal's construction. The impact of politics on the canal corridor was most visible in the physical layout of the I&M and the canal towns. Canal commissioners, in fact, surveyed and established legal boundaries throughout several entire towns including Chicago. The theme of politics and government is reflected in such buildings as county courthouses, city and village halls, and post offices, as well as the residences of prominent politicians, and the sites of famous political debates.

Politics & Government,
1871 - 1940 (Pm):

2

This theme is reflected in the same kinds of structures and sites discussed above but is considered of lesser importance in the years 1871 to 1940.

Politics & Government,
post-1940 (Pr):

0

For the post-1940 years, this theme is considered non-historic.

Labor:

Labor, c. 1830 - 1870 (Le): 3

Labor is an underlying or contributing theme to a large number of the Heritage Corridor's historical resources. The men who toiled during the construction of the I&M comprised the most significant group of early laborers in the region. As industry came to the

HISTORICAL THEMESCOREEXPLANATION

Heritage Corridor, so did many men, women and children in search of work in the quarries, mines and factories. Poor working conditions, long hours, and low pay led to numerous strikes, boycotts, and even violence. Early attempts to organize unions were often met with stiff resistance from the employers. A number of historical events in the Heritage Corridor concerning the struggle of labor assumed regional and national significance. The theme of labor may be reflected in workers' housing, craft union or industrial union halls, or even a site of labor strife.

Labor, 1871 - 1940 (Lm):

2

This theme may be reflected in the same kinds of structures and sites discussed above but is considered of lesser importance in the years 1871 to 1940.

Labor, post-1940 (Lr):

0

This theme is considered non-historic for the post-1940 years.

Social History:

Social History,
c. 1830 - 1870 (He):

3

The broad theme of social history may be seen across the entire spectrum of historic buildings within the Heritage Corridor. However, for the purposes of the HAES/HAER survey, only such institutional structures as religious and educational buildings, or buildings of such organizations as fraternal societies, charitable societies, or social reform groups, are placed under this theme.

| <u>HISTORICAL THEME</u> | <u>SCORE</u> | <u>EXPLANATION</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Social History, cont'd. | | |
| Social History, 1871 - 1940 (Hm): | 2 | This theme is reflected in the same kinds of structures and sites discussed above but is considered of lesser importance in the years from 1870 to 1940. |
| Social History, post-1940 (Hr): | 0 | This theme is considered non-historic for the post-1940 years. |
| Arts and Culture: | | |
| Arts & Culture, 1830s-1890s (Ee): | 3 | The theme of arts and culture is expressed in the Heritage Corridor's dance halls, opera houses, art galleries, works of art (carvings, sculptures and murals, for example), museums and libraries. |
| Arts & Culture, 1900s-1930s (Em): | 2 | During the late-19th and early 20th centuries people living in the canal towns became more highly conscious of the arts. The populace sought to build libraries, theaters, and galleries as places to experience or express their interests in the arts. These years also witnessed the emergence of the arts and crafts movement in which the Midwest, particularly the Chicago to Lockport region, played an important role. |
| Arts & Culture, post-1940 (Er): | 0 | This theme is considered non-historic for the post-1940 years. |

| <u>HISTORICAL THEME</u> | <u>SCORE</u> | <u>EXPLANATION</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------|---|
| Recreation (Parks) (Rp) | 2 | <p>The first parks appeared in the Heritage Corridor in the late-19th century and were either privately owned or were established for public use by local philanthropists. The I&M was transferred to the Illinois Division of Parks in 1935, just two years after commercial operation of the canal was halted. Throughout the mid-to-late 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) carried out extensive work on the I&M to develop its recreational potential. Repairs to such canal structures as locks, locktenders' houses, culverts and aqueducts were executed by the CCC. The CCC also built picnic areas, hiking paths, fish ladders, and masonry shelters along the I&M corridor. Similar work was done by the CCC in the nearby state parks. The CCC restoration work performed on the I&M Canal's structures, though of low caliber by today's preservation standards, is now recognized as being part of the Heritage Corridor's historical record. The recreation (parks) theme as reflected in the CCC-built structures is ranked as a two. Most of the original privately-built parks are now state parks.</p> |

The first step, then, in this rating system identifies the appropriate historical theme or themes for each historic structure. If more than one theme was reflected in a single structure, HABS/HAER scored the structure within the theme of greatest historical importance. Nonetheless, as will be seen in the second part of the rating system, HABS/HAER evaluated the historical and architectural qualities of each structure incorporating all of the appropriate historical themes.

Part II. Historical and Architectural Importance

The second part of this rating system focuses on two intrinsic characteristics of historic structures, history and architecture. Drawing upon the major historical themes listed above, HAES/HAER assessed the historical and architectural importance of each inventoried structure. As shown in Table 1-2, a wide range of factors was considered in determining the structure's final score:

TABLE 1-2

| <u>HISTORY</u> | <u>ARCHITECTURE</u> |
|---|--|
| Important historical events with national, regional, or local significance. | Outstanding examples of architectural styles reflecting a type, period or method of construction; assessed on a national and regional level. |
| Persons in the past who were important to the nation, the region, or the local communities. | Association with a master builder; this may include an architect with national or regional prominence. |
| Important engineering or industrial works reflecting a significant advancement, or representing a significant period in the nation's technological history. | Structures "that have yielded, or may be likely to yield," information important to the nation's building arts history. |
| Structures "that have yielded, or may be likely to yield," information important to the nation's history.* | |

As a measure of historical and architectural importance, HAES/HAER devised a four point system to indicate the following:

1. High level of historical and/or architectural importance (3 points)
2. Moderate level of historical and/or architectural importance (2 points)
3. Low level of historical and/or architectural importance (1 point)
4. No historical and/or architectural importance (0 points)

*Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," NPS, June 1, 1982.

Part III. Physical Qualities

The third and final part of the rating system considers the physical qualities of each structure. Primarily, this takes into account the degree to which a structure retains its physical appearance from its period, or periods, of historical importance and how much of its historic context remains. In assessing each structure's physical qualities the following factors were calculated: physical integrity including materials (the physical elements that were used to erect the structure) and workmanship (the physical evidence of the skill and technique of the people who erected the structure), the compatibility of any modifications with a structure's historic appearance, the setting including original location and landscaping features, and the context which encompasses related structures and streetscapes. HABS/HAER devised a four-point scoring system for rating each structure's physical qualities. The categories are as follows:

- 1) High physical qualities; a high degree of the structure's physical appearance and context is retained from its period, or periods, of historical importance. (3 points)
- 2) Moderate physical qualities; a moderate degree of the structure's physical appearance and context is retained from its period, or periods, of historical importance. (2 points)
- 3) Low physical qualities; a low degree of the structure's physical appearance and context is retained from its period, or periods, of historical importance. Also included in this category are post-1940 (non-historic) buildings that do not detract from their surroundings. (1 point)
- 4) Without physical qualities; a structure that through destruction or alterations retains little or none of its physical appearance from its period, or periods, of historical importance. Also included in this category are post-1940 (non-historic) buildings that detract from their surroundings. (no points)

Part IV: Final Tabulation and Ranking of Inventoried Structures

The numbers assigned in each of these three parts, Historical Themes, Historical and Architectural Importance, and Physical Qualities, were then added. The sum of these three numbers constituted the "points" each structure received. The total number of points for each structure then determined the category in which it was placed. The relation between the category and the point score is listed below.

CATEGORY I: TOTAL SCORE = 8 to 9 points
CATEGORY II: TOTAL SCORE = 6 to 7 points
CATEGORY III: TOTAL SCORE = 4 to 5 points
CATEGORY IV: TOTAL SCORE = 1 to 3 points
CATEGORY V: TOTAL SCORE = C Intrusions

Definitions of Categories

Categories I through V for historic resources within the I & M Heritage Corridor, as utilized in the HABS/HAER study, may be defined as follows:

Category I

Resources of great historical, architectural or technological importance within the Heritage Corridor possessing a sufficiently high degree of positive physical qualities to warrant documentation, preservation and, in some cases, restoration.

All Category I buildings and structures should be considered for documentation by HABS/HAER standards.

Category II

Resources of historic architectural or technological importance within the Heritage Corridor possessing a sufficiently high degree of positive physical qualities to warrant preservation.

All Category II buildings or structures should be considered for documentation by HABS/HAER if they are to be adversely impacted in any way.

Category III

Resources which are of minor historic, architectural or technological importance within the Heritage Corridor or resources of greater importance which lack positive physical qualities and therefore do not warrant special preservation procedures. They should, however, be protected from demolition.

Category IV

Resources of little or no historical, architectural or technological importance within the Heritage Corridor. No special preservation recommendations.

Category V

Resources which, because of their lack of historical, architectural and technological importance and negative physical qualities, form an intrusion in a historic area. It is recommended that these buildings and structures be considered for removal when appropriate and feasible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Each overview report highlights the Category I buildings, identified through the above evaluation process, and includes a photograph of each. The Category I buildings merit further HABS/HAER documentation and may be eligible for listing on the National Register.

Standards and guidelines for HABS/HAER documentation appear as part of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation (Federal Register, Sept. 29, 1983). The types of documentation which may be considered appropriate for the type of resources in the Corridor are large format photography, measured drawings, and/or written historical information.

HABS/HAER documentation provides the basic resource management information needed by the Midwest Regional Office, by the Illinois and Michigan Heritage Corridor Commission and others. However, HABS/HAER documentation can and should be used for much more. In fact, it is not uncommon to utilize HABS/HAER documentation to further the overall objectives of the sponsoring organization. With respect to the Heritage Corridor, many of the historic resources, particularly those of industrial significance, have not received the attention or recognition which they deserve. HABS/HAER documentation provides material which can be directly utilized to educate the public to the importance of historic resources within the Heritage Corridor. The quality of HABS/HAER documentation is of national exhibit level--in fact, HABS/HAER documentation is frequently used in national exhibits, publications and similar forms.

In an effort to put the documentation that HABS/HAER has produced so far, and will produce in 1987, in the hands of the public, a book compiling the results of the three years of survey and documentation should be published. This book would set the architectural heritage of the several towns in context, both in relation to each other and to the industrial resources in the Heritage Corridor. The measured drawings and large-format photographs produced by HABS/HAER, as well as historic photographs and drawings, would constitute excellent illustrations for such a publication.

The survey of historic resources in the Heritage Corridor should continue. HABS/HAER will undertake additional survey work in 1987, but there will be much that remains to be done. HABS/HAER could develop a work plan which would analyze the various methodologies it has employed throughout its three years of survey work in the Heritage Corridor and determine which is most effective. A time-table and cost estimates for surveying all of the architectural resources that have not been surveyed so far would be included. With this work plan, appropriate means of surveying all of the historic resources in the Heritage Corridor could be identified.

CHAPTER 2

PERU: OVERVIEW

- Red - All pre-1940 buildings surveyed
Blue - All buildings surveyed

LOCATION

Peru is located approximately 100 miles southwest of Chicago in west central LaSalle County. Founded in 1834, the city is now bounded by Interstate 80 (north), the Illinois River Waterway (south), and adjoining LaSalle (east). The former Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, and Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific railroads traverse the south edge; U.S. Route 51 runs north-south through Peru, dividing the city unequally.

An alluvial flood plain along the north bank of the Illinois River forms the city's southern boundary. The flood plain quickly gives way to rocky bluffs. When the first settlers arrived in the 1830s the bluff tops north of the river were covered with stands of hickory, oak, and elm, the remainder in rolling, grassy prairie. The principal natural resources were coal, clay, timber, limestone, sandstone, and rich black and brown loam topsoil.

SETTLEMENT

On March 2, 1827, the U.S. Congress signed a federal land grant giving 284,000 acres to Illinois. Parcels were to be sold to finance construction of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, and consisted of alternating sections two-and-one-half miles wide on either side of the proposed canal corridor. Settlement of the area was thus sparked.

The first white settler was John Hays, who moved his family to Peru from Tennessee in 1830. He built a log cabin near what is now the intersection of Fourth and Adams Streets, and operated a ferry across the Illinois River until 1840. No evidence of the Hays cabin remains and no physical description was ever recorded. The majority of Peru's first settlers were Protestant New Englanders; drawn by Peru's economic potential, many had migrated from Tennessee, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. The Illinois Legislature had previously set aside Section 16 of every township for school purposes. Spurred by the increasing number of settlers in the area, the school commission platted and sold the southwest quarter of Section 16 and named it Peru. The Canal Commission selected neighboring LaSalle as the terminus of the canal, however, because of its siting on canal-owned land. The Commission hoped to encourage the development of LaSalle and create additional revenues to support the canal. Much of Peru's potential for economic and commercial development was thus diverted to its neighbor.

Samuel Bullock surveyed the original plat of Peru, which was recorded September 9, 1834. The town first extended from Water to North (now Fourth) Streets, and from West to East (Pine) Streets and comprised nineteen blocks. Theron Brewster platted the first (Ninewah's) addition in 1836. These sixty-one blocks are adjacent to the western edge of the original plat, running from Water to Sixth Streets and from West to Calhoun Streets. Brewster platted three more additions to the town before its incorporation in 1851. During the late 1830s and 1840s small landowners divided so many properties east of the original plat that LaSalle and Peru had established their common border by 1851.

Construction on the I & M Canal began July 4, 1836, with labor and capital both in short supply. Advertisements for workers were placed in newspapers in the eastern United States, Canada, and Ireland, promising excellent wages. Peru quickly gained one of the largest immigrant populations in the Midwest, a region with notably high immigration rates. Indeed, in 1838 Peru and LaSalle counted 2,000 Irish, Germans, and French Canadians among their citizenry. Concurrently, however, a shortage of capital was causing the frequent suspension of work on the canal. In an attempt to alleviate continuing financial woes, the Canal Commission issued scrip to canal contractors and laborers. Scrip was payable ninety days after date of issue and was supported by state-negotiated bonds. In 1841-42 Illinois was unable to pay the interest on its bonds, rendering the scrip virtually worthless. Eventually the state agreed to accept scrip as payment for land. In this manner many canal workmen became landowners, settling in the area as farmers or laborers.

Peru was incorporated as a city on March 15, 1851, with Theron Brewster elected first mayor. The 1851 city limits included all property between Water and Eighth, Calhoun and Peru Streets. Incorporation enabled the city to issue bonds for the construction of the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad. The Illinois General Assembly had granted a charter to the Rock Island and LaSalle Railroad February 27, 1847, extending the line to Chicago in 1851. The railroad was to be constructed on canal land and operated in conjunction with the canal to draw additional trade from the upper Mississippi River to Chicago. The first tracks were laid in Chicago October 10, 1851, and the line opened to LaSalle in March 1853; by the following summer the line was completed to Rock Island. Passenger traffic on the canal was almost entirely eliminated as a result. In February 1857 the city limits were extended north to Shooting Park and Cemetery Roads and thus included all of Sections 16 and 17. In 1858 Peru boasted seven public schools, six churches, 718 dwellings and tenements, three factories, three breweries, and numerous commercial establishments.

In the same year Peru reported a population of 3652, half of whom were foreign born (30% German, 13% Irish). An additional 24% were first-generation Americans. Although the Irish formed a substantial minority, it was the German immigrants who made the greater contribution to the town's development. They arrived in Peru with the flood of Germans who settled throughout the Midwest during the mid-nineteenth century. The 1857-58 city directory indicates that the immigrants settled in a concentration between the 1600 and 2100 blocks of Third through Fifth Streets. The directory further suggests that at this time the majority of the Germans were laborers, forming the backbone of Peru's workforce rather than the community's political or economic leadership. Nonetheless, the immigrants exerted their influence in numerous permanent ways.

This German legacy is marked, for example, by the more than one-half dozen randomly coursed sandstone structures remaining in the settlement area, the only grouping of such buildings in Peru. Perhaps the best preserved of these are the massed plan, side-gable, two-and-one-half story houses at 1910 and 1923 Fourth Street. Their blockiness and striking lack of decorative details

are typical of vernacular German-American architecture. Other examples of stone construction are found in the massive gable-front house at 1709 Fifth Street (outside the survey area), the smaller cottages-turned-stores at 1920 and 2007 Fourth Street, and the much-altered commercial building at 2000 Fourth Street.

The community is spiritually represented by St. Joseph's Church (Schuyler Street at Fifth), established in 1854 for Peru's German Catholics, who formed a majority of the immigrants. The congregation's 1877 church, a very good example of Gothic Revival architecture, also in stone, was not included in the survey. The parish is also distinguished by St. Joseph's Halle, an eclectic two-and-one-half story brick building constructed in 1914. This structure was designed to house an auditorium, bowling alleys, club rooms and kitchen, which suggests the church's important social function as a center for cultural activities. The complex also includes a large neoclassical brick rectory built in 1905; it has been extensively altered. The Zion German Evangelical Church (now Zion Church of Christ) was founded in 1852 to serve the area's smaller German Protestant element. Although its 1866 Gothic Revival structure at Sixth and Grant Streets has been altered by a major addition to the facade, the church has served as another center of German influence.

The Peru Turnvereine was organized in 1854 as a center for German social, musical and athletic activities. In 1865 the group constructed a frame gymnasium at Ninth and Peoria Streets, moving it to Fourth Street in 1874. The four-story frame Turn Hall constructed next door was then the largest building on Fourth Street and served as another focal point for the German community. When this building was destroyed by fire in 1892, a four-story brick replacement was constructed immediately, at a cost of \$45,000. This Romanesque Revival building was demolished in the 1980s.

Peru's City Hall and Market House was erected in 1855 at a cost of \$12,000. Located at the foot of West Street between First and Second Streets, the building contained a council chamber, public hall, market stalls, and jail. When the city moved its administrative offices to their current location at Putnam and Third streets in 1960, the structure was leased to the American Nickeloid Company and demolished within a decade. City offices are now located in the former Central School, 706 Putnam Street; the second story has been removed from this 1904 Romanesque Revival building.

Peru's first post office was established in February 1836. The post office operated from a series of Water Street storefronts until 1903, when it moved to a Fourth Street site. In 1908 the office then moved to the south side of Fourth between Peoria and Fulton Streets, where it remained for twenty-five years. In 1932 the federal government funded the construction of a new Post Office at the southwest corner of Fourth and West Streets. This high-style neoclassical limestone building has been extremely well preserved.

The citizens of Peru began campaigning for a public library in 1908. Philanthropist Andrew Carnegie donated \$15,000 for the construction of a

building with the provision that the city would arrange a site and appropriate \$1,500 annually for the building's maintenance. The Peru Library was erected on the southeast corner of Putnam and Third streets, opening in December of 1911. With its dark, rusticated brick, and red tile roof, the building displays some Spanish Colonial Revival influence; it retains excellent integrity. The structure has been vacant since the opening of a new library at West and Eleventh streets in 1985.

INDUSTRY

The principal catalysts for the development of industry in Peru were its richness in important natural resources -- fertile soil and bituminous coal -- and its accessibility to major transportation routes -- the Illinois River, the Illinois and Michigan Canal, and the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific and Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy railroads.

The earliest industries in Peru were small-scale, producing goods for local consumption. They included flour mills, sawmills, blacksmith shops and breweries. The cultivation of corn, oats and wheat dominated the local economy from the 1840s until about 1880, during which time Peru served as a center for agricultural trade and service. The earliest major industry was the Peru Plow and Wheel Company, established in 1858 to manufacture agricultural implements. In 1858 local factories also produced fanning mills -- machines that separated wheat from chaff -- and corn shellers. Peru's lumber products industry arose on Water Street in the mid-nineteenth century because of the adjacent Illinois River and steamboat basin of the I & M Canal. Lumber yards appeared here as early as 1848, and a planing mill by the 1870s.

The presence of high quality bituminous coal in the area was confirmed by a state geologist in 1855, the year a mine shaft was first sunk in LaSalle. Coal mining was a significant factor in the county economy during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, although only two companies operated in Peru. Local coal companies used deep shaft mines 400 to 500 feet underground and were eventually unable to compete with strip mining conducted near Ottawa, Joliet, and elsewhere in the state. The Union Coal Company of Peru was the last to operate in the area, closing in the 1940s.

Heavy industry flourished in Peru until well into the twentieth century because of cheap, readily available energy and transportation. A foundry operated here as early as 1857. By 1900 Charles Brunner's foundry, located near the I&M Canal steamboat basin, was the city's largest. The area's first major heavy industry dependent on coal was LaSalle's Mathiessen and Hegler (M & H) Zinc Works, established in 1858. The Illinois Zinc Company, which became M & H's largest competitor, was incorporated in Peru in 1870. By 1880 zinc smelting had become the most lucrative local industry. The Illinois Zinc Company produced spelter (zinc slabs), sheet zinc, sulphuric acid, and acid phosphates.

Around the turn of the century, several industries arose which were dependent on the zinc smelting companies. They included the American Nickeloid Company, National Sheet Metal Company, and Maze Nail Company. American Nickeloid, established in 1898, was among the first manufacturers of nickel-coated zinc sheets in the United States. National Sheet Metal Company was first organized in 1901 as the Peru Sheet Metal Plating and Novelty Company. Its works occupied a mid-nineteenth century commercial block on Water Street until about 1985.

Among Peru's manufacturing concerns the most important was the Western Clock Company, also known as Westclox. Begun in 1885 as the United Clock Company, Westclox emerged in the early 1900s as the nation's largest manufacturer of alarm clocks, and pocket and wrist watches. Much of Westclox's sprawling factory complex, located on the east side of Peru, was built in the 1910s and 1920s. The company also owned a great deal of real estate in the city. By 1950 Westclox had as many as 3,500 people on its payroll and was by far Peru's largest single employer. Peru's industries were prosperous through the 1920s, but, similar to other towns in the Upper Illinois Valley, experienced financial setbacks during the Depression. While some measure of prosperity returned after World War II, many of Peru's manufacturing companies have recently closed or moved to the southern United States, where labor and other expenses are cheaper.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Water Street developed as Peru's earliest commercial district because of its proximity to the Illinois River and I & M Canal. The steamboat route from New Orleans and St. Louis, established in 1828, terminated at Peru where a deep channel in the Illinois River provided a steamboat turnaround. By the early 1840s area farmers had progressed from subsistence farming to the cultivation of cash crops, and Peru had developed into a thriving trade center. Farmers from a 100-mile radius travelled here to sell their produce and purchase finished goods. With the opening of the I & M Canal in 1848, cargo and passengers bound for Chicago were transferred from steamboat to barges at Water Street.

Because of the ease and economy of shipping on the Illinois River, commercial enterprises flourished on Water Street from 1835 to 1880. This area's earliest stores were housed in frame structures, none of which have survived. By the late 1840s, however, two- and three-story stone and brick structures with little applied ornamentation began to appear. The commercial block at 1527-1529 Water Street is an excellent example of early brick commercial architecture in Peru. This Italianate structure, the western half of which predates 1862, retains its cast-iron cornice, window hoods and sills. The building is one of the most ornate early commercial structures on Water Street. The east half of the building was erected between 1862 and 1868, and features a simple brick cornice, segmental-arched lintels and sills of limestone.

Several other brick commercial structures on Water Street date from the 1850s. These buildings display elements and details of the Italianate style, such as denticulated brick cornices and recessed brickwork in the frieze and between stories. The building at 1521 Water Street also retains its mid-nineteenth century storefront. Other significant structures are grouped in a three-block area of Water Street between Peoria and West Streets.

As the city of Peru expanded, Water Street became a less desirable business location, although the area maintained its commercial vitality into the 1890s. The decline of Water Street as a commercial area--because of its poor location and tendency toward flooding--paralleled the rise of Fourth Street. Merchants looking for new store sites saw a ready-made market for their goods and services here in the German settlement. This pre-established commercial district seems to have encouraged the mass exodus from Water to Fourth Street during the late nineteenth century, rather than to another, untried area of Peru.

By 1857 "August Bulfer's grocery[,] John Aaron's grocery in the Anton Meyer building[,] Dr. Raith's drug and fancy goods stores[,] and Conrad Eickenfelder's saloon" (Peru Centennial, p. 20) had been established at the corners of Fourth and Peoria Streets. The area was called "The Four Corners," a moniker that has lasted through the present.

By 1875 the German commercial district was as well established as it was exclusive. Of the eight dry goods stores in Peru, for example, four were located on or within one-half block of Fourth Street; all of these were operated by men with German surnames (i.e., Birkenbeuel, Bulfer, Gerringer, Raith). Similarly, of the city's twenty-one groceries, eleven were on Fourth Street and all, again, were managed by Germans. Bakeries, saloons, barbershops, and hardware stores were correspondingly represented. Parallel figures appear in the city's 1885-86 index. In contrast, none of Peru's five lawyers or six insurance companies, and only one of its five physicians, maintained offices on Fourth Street in 1875.

As late as 1888 the Fourth Street commercial district was concentrated in the 1800 block, flanked by the Four Corners on the east and the Turnvereine Hall and Washington House on the west. The latter, operated as a boarding house from before 1885 until at least 1909, is a two-story, T-shaped frame building with false front. Although its clapboard siding has been stuccoed, the structure stands otherwise unchanged at 1902 Fourth Street.

Nine of the fourteen businesses on the north side of the 1800 block of Fourth Street in 1888 were located in two-story brick buildings. The remainder operated from one- or two-story frame structures. On the south side of the street, however, no brick buildings had as yet been constructed. Three of the seven businesses were located in stone buildings, the remainder in frame structures. Even at this late date, one residence was still used as such on the south side.

The 1900 block of Fourth Street was then residential, although some commercial

infiltration had occurred with the partial use of residences as stores. The gable-front, two-story frame house at No. 1917 dates from this period, although in a highly altered state. At No. 1925-27 a false-front saloon and grocery had also been constructed by 1888. Indeed, this building is perhaps the oldest extant commercial structure in downtown Peru, as well as the only frame commercial structure in the city to retain its architectural integrity. Although re-sided with asbestos shingles, the building retains historic storefronts (nineteenth century and c. 1935) and is one the best preserved commercial buildings in Peru.

Most of Fourth Street's extant commercial structures date from the building boom that occurred between 1889 and 1905. Stores were constructed for the downtown's new merchants, those who had moved "up the hill" from Water Street. Many more, however, were erected as replacements for early houses or frame commercial buildings that had outlived their usefulness for the increasingly successful German merchants. Fourth Street thus began to emerge as the city's predominant commercial district and lose its ethnic exclusiveness.

The buildings constructed on Fourth Street around the turn of the century are, almost without exception, brick, two stories high, and one or two storefronts wide. The Christian Haas Building (No. 1824) is downtown Peru's only example of Italianate architecture. It was constructed in 1889 to house Haas' furniture store, a function it served until 1932. The structure retains its cast-iron frontispiece, cornice, and elaborate hoodmolds, although the first floor has been extensively altered. Most other buildings of the period display Queen Anne-style features, such as the Masonic Temple/Charles Seepe and Sons Dry Goods Store (No. 1709-1713), Henry Hoerner Building (No. 1801), Louis Graf Building (No. 1830), and 1701 Fourth Street.

The Masonic Temple, constructed in 1896, is Fourth Street's only three-story structure and one of its most elaborate. It features pressed metal, two-story bays with elaborate decorative relief; the building housed the Seepe store until 1930. The 1902 Hoerner Building was constructed and named for a prominent local industrialist and politician. Hoerner was nine-time mayor of the city as well as owner of the Union Brewing/Star Union Products Company for fifty years. The structure features an elaborate second floor with corner turret and keystone brick lintels, although the storefront itself has been extensively altered. The Graf Building is one of the best preserved commercial structures in Peru. This modest Queen Anne-style building features a corner turret with bell-kicked conical roof. Unlike most of Peru's other storefronts, this building retains its glass block transoms and central entrance with flanking display windows. It replaced Graf's frame, pre-1888 agricultural implements factory on the same site. Constructed between 1906 and 1909, No. 1701 is the youngest Queen Anne-style structure on Fourth Street. It features an elaborate parapet roofline and projecting bays, although its first floor has been re-sided in metal. From 1915 or before until at least 1940, Walther Drug Store was located here.

The building at No. 1701 is an exception to Fourth Street's early twentieth century commercial architecture, which quickly assumed the blocky massing and simpler details so typical of this era. With their simple cornices and regular, relatively unadorned second-story fenestration, Nos. 1609, 1727, and 2013 provide good examples of early twentieth-century construction in Peru. Indeed, No. 1727 was constructed for immigrant August Bulfer as a replacement for his frame, pre-1888 bakery and confectionery on the same site.

By the second decade of this century, few structures were being erected in the Fourth Street commercial area, although a number of nineteenth century buildings were re-faced. The most notable example is the Peru National Bank, a 1925 neoclassical incorporation of three formerly independent late nineteenth-century commercial buildings (No. 1808). Although the bank's monumental size somewhat overwhelms its neighbors, its Greek Doric details are well proportioned and executed.

The 1931 Peru Theatre, 1911 Fourth Street, is the most important commercial building constructed in Peru since 1910. It is one of the city's only examples of art moderne architecture, exhibiting a glazed-brick face with stepped roofline and terra cotta trim. The structure is an excellent example of the style and is eligible for listing on the National Register, although it has been abandoned since 1981 and is deteriorating severely.

Peru's downtown commercial district has never expanded extensively beyond a five-block area of Fourth Street (between West and Plum Streets), although fringe development exists on both edges. Since World War II downtown construction has been modest both in quality and quantity. Most post-1940 structures are flat-roofed, one story, faced in brick or formstone, and possess neither the massing nor details with which to blend with late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings. Additionally, a number of early commercial buildings have recently been re-faced in metal or stucco, further compromising the character of the historic district.

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE

Because of the complete reorientation of Peru's business district from Water to Fourth Street, the houses located between these thoroughfares were also surveyed; Peru was the only community in the 1986 project with a substantial number of residences inventoried. This residential area, which marks Peru's original plat and first addition, possesses some of the city's earliest buildings and most important residences.

The oldest house for which a reliable construction date can be ascribed is the 1841 Theron Brewster House at 1806-1808 Third Street. This L-shaped, two-and-a-half-story brick Greek Revival-style building was constructed for Peru's most influential resident in the nineteenth century. Brewster was an early settler who platted the Ninewah Addition and served as the city's first mayor; he also established the Peru Plow and Wheel Company and the First National Bank. Unfortunately his home has been re-faced with stucco and its

fenestration substantially altered, and is now surrounded by modest, early to mid-twentieth-century houses.

Another documented residence from this early period is the John L. McCormick House (520 Peoria Street). With its pedimented gable and flat-roofed, facade-long porch on wood columns, this 1848 two-story brick structure is typical of Greek Revival-style houses in the area. McCormick founded two of Peru's largest businesses in the nineteenth century--an ice-harvesting operation and the Five Day line, a packet-boat operation between LaSalle and St. Louis. He was also prominent in farming, stock trading, and bridge construction.

The Churchill Coffing House (1323 Center Street) and 1009 Fourth Street provide other high-style examples of Greek Revival architecture. Coffing was an early settler in Peru who served as village trustee (1840-46), president of the village board (1841-43), and first city clerk (1851). Little is known about the early history of 1009 Fourth Street but both houses remain in a good state of preservation.

The Samuel Maze House (1862) is a large two-story brick building with classical detailing at 1710 Second Street. Maze was an Irish immigrant who settled in Peru in 1838 and opened a lumberyard on Water Street a decade later. He also shipped grain by barge on the Illinois and Michigan Canal, arranging return shipments of lumber and hardware. Maze's son, Walter, assumed the family business in 1885, and soon began the production of zinc-coated nails. He remodelled the house with its neoclassical details after visiting the Columbian Exposition in 1893. Both house and lumberyard remain in the family to the present.

Other early residences are in a vernacular style, exhibiting no evidence of architects or pattern books. These include the Isaac Abrams House (1616 First Street), constructed for a local real estate agent, the William Paul House (1427 Center), 1729 Main Street, and the house in the 1500 block of Third Street now used as the Christian Science Church. All two stories with symmetrical fenestration, the first is brick, the rest are stone, and all have been extensively altered.

The majority of Peru's earliest residents were Protestant New Englanders, who quickly assumed the roles of social and political leadership in Peru, and constructed the town's first grand houses. Brewster, McCormick, Coffing, and Abrams were all transplanted New Englanders. In contrast, the Germans and Irish who settled in Peru in the 1840s formed the community's working class, and appear to have remained within the same economic and ethnic framework for a number of decades. Thus the immigrants' mid-nineteenth-century residences tend to be modest, with few stylistic details, such as the German houses around Fourth Street.

Some immigrants, of course, rose more quickly to positions of wealth and stature in the community, and their houses reflect this prosperity. The Maze

house exemplifies this phenomenon; indeed, it was constructed more than a decade after the grand houses of the New Englanders. Additionally, some German immigrants constructed major houses in Peru during the mid and late nineteenth century, including Ernest Gunther (1516 Second Street) and Herman Brunner (1406 Bluff Street). The former is a two-story stone building (a concession to Gunther's German heritage) with Greek Revival details -- interrupted returns, unadorned but prominent wood frieze, shuttered windows with six-over-six-light, double-hung sash. Of special note is the neoclassical entrance with oversized, broken pediment in the otherwise blind east wall. The house has been maintained in an exemplary manner and well represents its first owner, operator of a barbershop, book store, and bleeding emporium on Water Street during the 1850s.

Herman Brunner arrived in Peru later still, moving from Germany in 1866. He quickly established himself, however, and became co-owner of the Peru Beer Company in 1872; Brunner maintained a controlling interest in the organization until his death in 1889. An undated lithograph of his house (likely from the late nineteenth century) depicts a two-story, T-shaped frame house with cross-gable roof. Shortly thereafter the house received its dormer-trimmed mansard roof, reflecting the Second Empire style -- and one of only two extant structures with this detailing in Peru. Owned by the Brunner family until the 1960s, the building retains much of its architectural integrity.

A number of very modest but early houses are found in the vicinity of Bluff and Center Streets in Peru's original plat. The 1855 City Hall stood at Center and West Streets (Bluff is one block north), making the area a prime location for early residential development. The most prominent of the buildings is Edward Loekle's Meat Market and House, 1430 Center Street (just east of the city site). This pre-1868 L-shaped building features a wide cornice, paired brackets, and six-over-six-light, double-hung sash windows with shouldered lintels. Although recently divided into apartments and re-faced with asphalt shingles, the house retains much of its architectural integrity. Loekle operated his business here until at least 1926, expanding with a second store on Fourth Street in 1888.

Other mid-nineteenth-century houses are less well documented. Many are gable-front, two-story frame buildings (all re-sided in the twentieth century) with three-bay facades and pre-1888 one-story wings to the side or rear. Some also had facade-long porches; only 1429 Bluff Street retains this feature with any integrity. Other examples are found at 1422, 1423, and 1428 Bluff Street. The 1868 bird's-eye view of Peru and later Sanborn Maps indicate that, with the exception of the gable-front houses on Bluff and Center, the town's earliest houses were located on large, tree-filled lots. Because the area remained desirable through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, parcels were subdivided and new houses constructed between the old. Later residences are generally frame and represent most popular architectural styles. Of note is the Italianate house at 1617 Second Street. This large, two-story frame building features the milk carton-like proportions and low pitched, hipped, bracketed roof so typical of the style. Further

distinguished by its facade-long porch, the house retains excellent integrity. It is one of the few examples of Italianate architecture in the survey area.

A number of T-shaped frame cottages were constructed for the growing middle class around the turn of the century, as Peru continued its strong industrial development. These houses are distinguished by their restrained detailing and generally simple massing. Many have been altered, but 1728 and 1829 Second Street and 1304 Bluff Street (with its paired hexagonal bays) retain their integrity.

The John Cahill House, 1628 Second Street, was constructed in 1892 for the heir to a prominent coal dealership. This severely deteriorating building combines elements from the Beaux Arts, shingle, and Queen Anne styles in its irregular massing, oversized, shingled gables, and wraparound porch with trebled columns. The John and Mary Mischke House (1527 Second Street) is another notable turn-of-the-century residence, influenced by the shingle and Queen Anne styles, built for the owner of a local bottling works. Featuring historical paint colors, a canted, two-story bay, and wraparound porch, this house is one of the best maintained and most accurately preserved buildings in the survey. The Charles Brunner House (1021 Fourth Street) is the only stone Queen Anne-style building in Peru. It is distinguished by its two- and three-story towers and rough-faced ashlar detailing. The house was constructed for the founder of a local iron works whose family resided here until at least 1926.

As the twentieth century progressed, fewer substantial houses were erected in this residential area because of sheer lack of space. The Thomas F. Noon House (1909), an excellent example of Colonial Revival-style architecture at 1322 Fourth Street, is among the last of the neighborhood's major buildings. The Dutch Colonial Revival and American Foursquare styles are best represented by the houses at 1515 and 1616 Second Streets, respectively. Most post-1940 residential construction here has been modest and intrusive.

METHODOLOGY

Planning

The survey area in Peru was roughly bounded by Fourth Street (north), the Illinois River (south), Buffalo Street (east), and Calhoun Street (west--see survey map). This area encompasses Peru's earliest commercial and industrial district on Water Street, the later commercial core on Fourth Street, and the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century residential neighborhood between.

Research

Mary Hahne, Peru Public Library, provided the team with an orientation of the local history collection. County and city histories, directories, newspapers, photographs, maps, atlases, and plat books were essential to the survey. The

library obtained additional materials such as federal reports and census data through interlibrary loan.

Although current tax information is available from the county assessor's office, historical records have apparently been lost. The former provided legal description of the sites, as well as the names and addresses of current owners. Peru began requiring building permits in 1966, which indicated the construction dates of recent structures and additions.

Maps were essential in determining the construction dates of buildings surveyed. An 1868 bird's-eye view was useful in identifying the earliest structures, which date from the canal's construction. Sanborn Company fire insurance maps proved instrumental in establishing dates for buildings erected between 1888 and 1926. Photocopies from the Library of Congress of maps dating from 1888, 1892, 1897, 1909, 1916, and 1926 were available. In addition, the team was able to obtain an excellent large-scale map of the city from Chamlin and Associates, Inc., a local engineering firm.

Fieldwork

Three team members were assigned to the Peru survey, which proceeded according to the general methodology, outlined above. Two hundred fifty-eight structures were surveyed, 79 of which pre-date 1886. The results appear in Table 2-1.

Finally, the buildings were evaluated and categorized according to the general methodology, outlined above.

TABLE 2-1
PERU SURVEY RESULTS
Dates of construction of surveyed buildings

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Commercial</u> | <u>Residential</u> | <u>Public</u> | <u>Religious</u> | <u>Industrial</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1835-1885 | 20 | 71 | | | |
| 1886-1895 | 5 | 27 | | | 2 |
| 1896-1905 | 10 | 42 | 1 | | 1 |
| 1906-1915 | 8 | 19 | 1 | | |
| 1916-1925 | 5 | 10 | | | |
| 1926-1940 | 1 | 3 | 1 | | |
| Post-1940 | 17 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the rating system developed for the I & M survey (explained in Introduction), fourteen buildings were found to qualify as Category I. All Category I buildings should be considered for documentation to HABS/HAER standards, and may be eligible for listing on the National Register. The Category I buildings in the area of Peru that was surveyed are listed below, and photographs of them follow. The abbreviation for the historical themes into which these buildings fell are included; the themes are explained in the general methodology section above.

- 1406 Bluff Street (Se)
- 1323 Center Street (Se)
- 1009 Fourth Street (Se)
- 1021 Fourth Street (Sm)
- 1729 Main Street (Se)
- 520 Peoria Street (Se)
- 1516 Second Street (Se)
- 1527 Second Street (Sm)
- 1617 Second Street (Se)
- 1628 Second Street (Sm)
- 1710 Second Street (Se)
- 1911 Fourth Street (En)
- Third and Putnam Streets (Em)
- 1923 Fourth Street (Ce)
- 1527-29 Water Street (Ce)

In addition, one group of buildings which may be eligible for listing on the National Register as a historic district was identified. This was Water Street between Peoria and Plain Streets. Because of the area's well-preserved architectural character and important historical association with the I & M Canal, it has excellent potential for listing as a historic district.

All pre-1940 structures in Peru should be inventoried. A windshield survey of properties outside the inventory area revealed forty-eight structures that merit further research because of possible historical and/or architectural significance. A list of these sites follows:

Residential Buildings

1172 Chartres (Lustron)
Calhoun and Tenth Streets
830 Calhoun Street
1522 Calhoun Street
1608 Eleventh Street (Lustron)
1228 Fifth Street
1309 Fifth Street
1609 Fifth Street
c. 2206 Fifth Street
2704 Fifth Street
2014 First Street
2016-2018 First Street
2603 First Street
2201 Fourth Street
1924 Main Street
2129 Market Street
2619 Market Street
2103 Ninth Street
Peoria between Sixth and Seventh Sts.
815 Peoria Street
1413 Peoria Street
1330 Plum Street
Pulaski and Sixth Streets
Pulaski and Twelfth Streets
812 Putnam Street
916 Putnam Street
925 Putnam Street
921 Rock Street
2215 Second Street
22 Seventh Street
30 Seventh Street
609 Seventh Street (lustron)
2003 Seventh Street
2027 Seventh Street
2622 Seventh Street
Third and Fulton Streets
1704 Walnut Street

Commercial Buildings

2325 Fourth Street
c. 1505 Peoria Street
1024 Pike Street
2105 Seventh Street

Institutional Buildings

Church of the Nazarene, 1209 Sixth Street
Congregational Church Parsonage,
West Street between Fourth and
Illinois Valley Community Hospital,
925 West Street
Roosevelt School, 2233 Sixth Street
St. Joseph's Catholic Church,
Rectory and Halle, Fifth Sts.
between Schuyler and Fulton Sts.
St. Mary's Catholic Church and
Rectory, 1319 Sixth Street
Washington School, Tenth and
Rock Sts

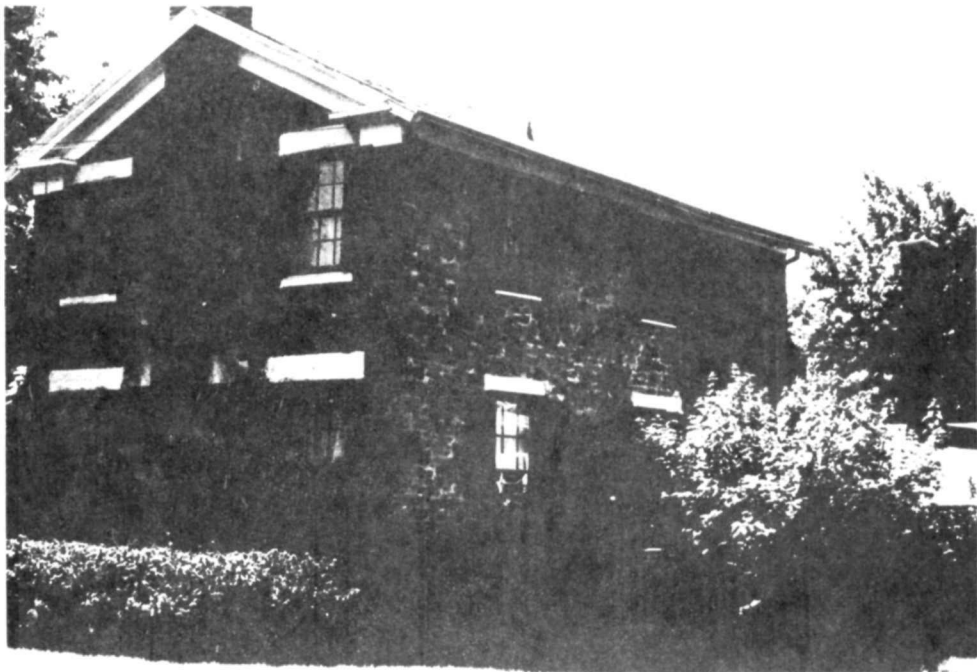


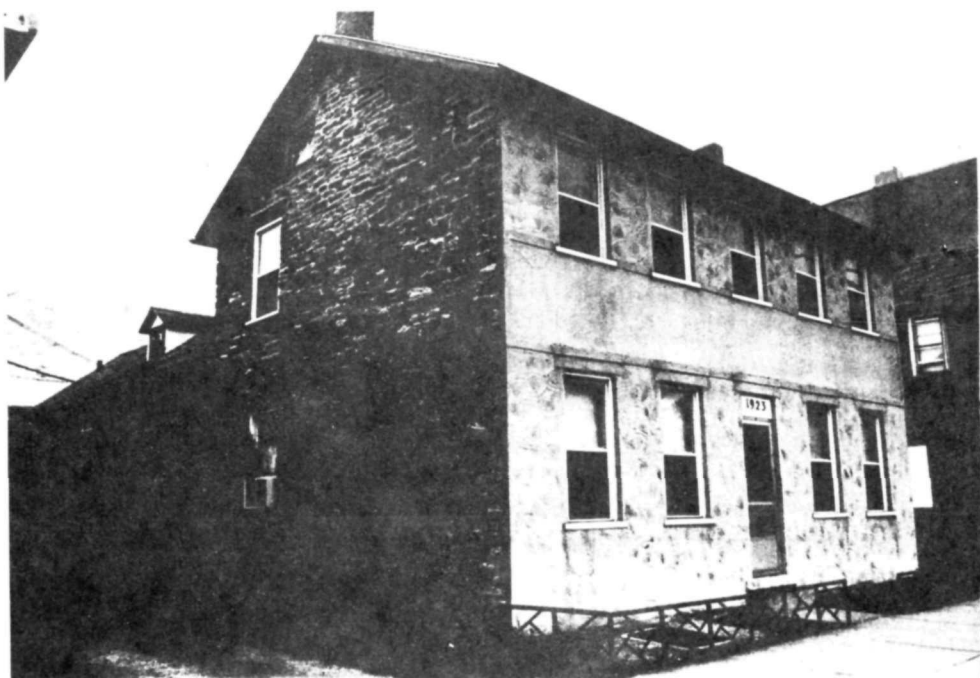
Captain John McCormick House
1848
Peru, Illinois
M.M. Stolberg, photographer-6/86



1617 Second Street
1868-1888
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86

Ernest Gunther House
circa 1850
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86





1923 Fourth Street
circa 1855
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86

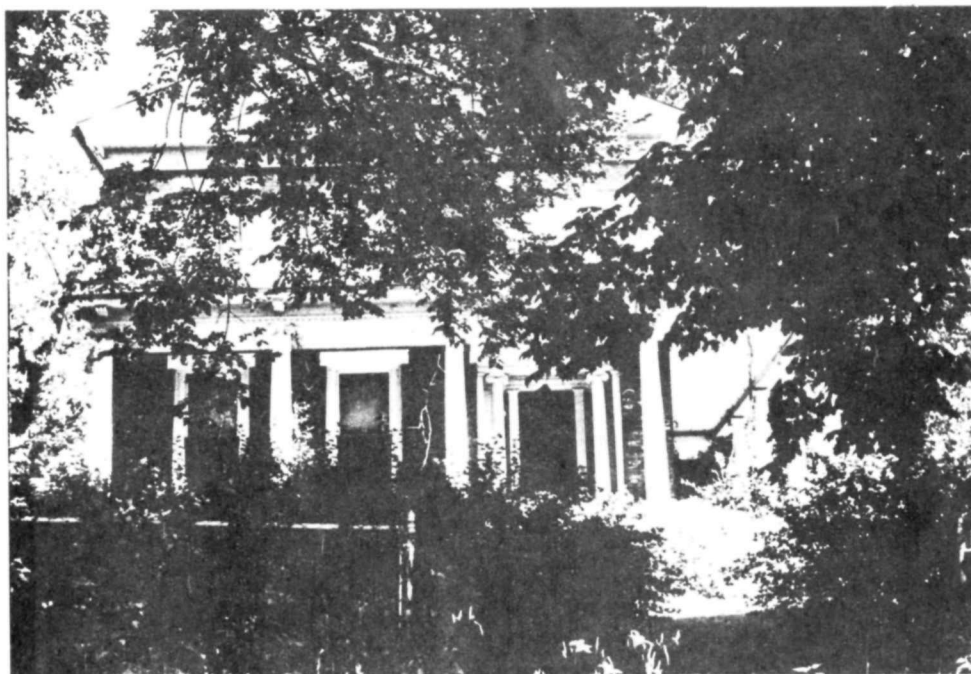
Herman Brunner House
1868-1888
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86





Samuel N. Maze House
1862
Peru, Illinois
M. Stolberg, photographer-6/86

Churchill Coffing House
circ 1857
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86

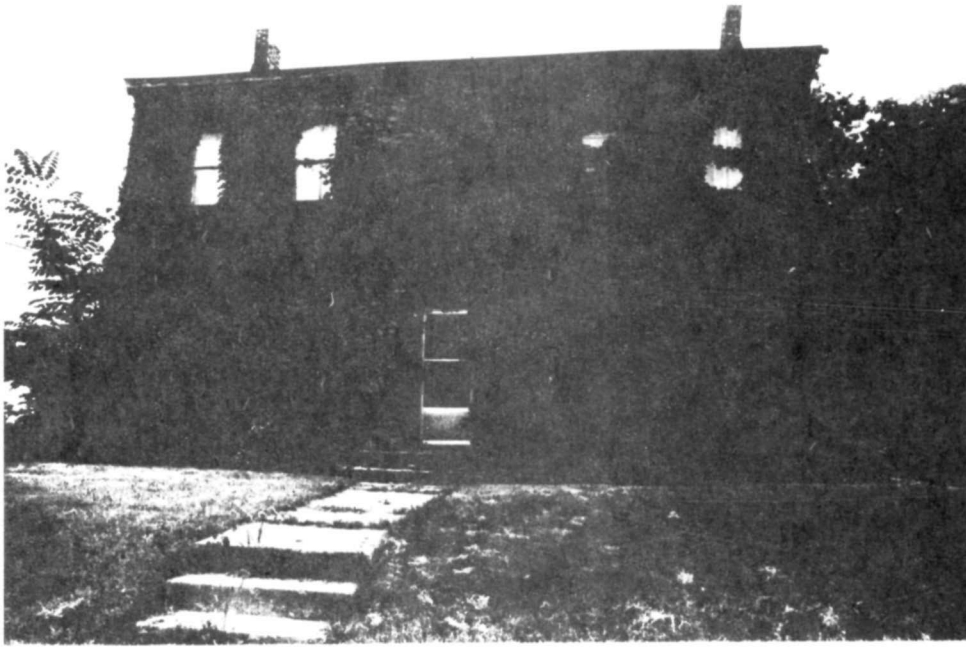




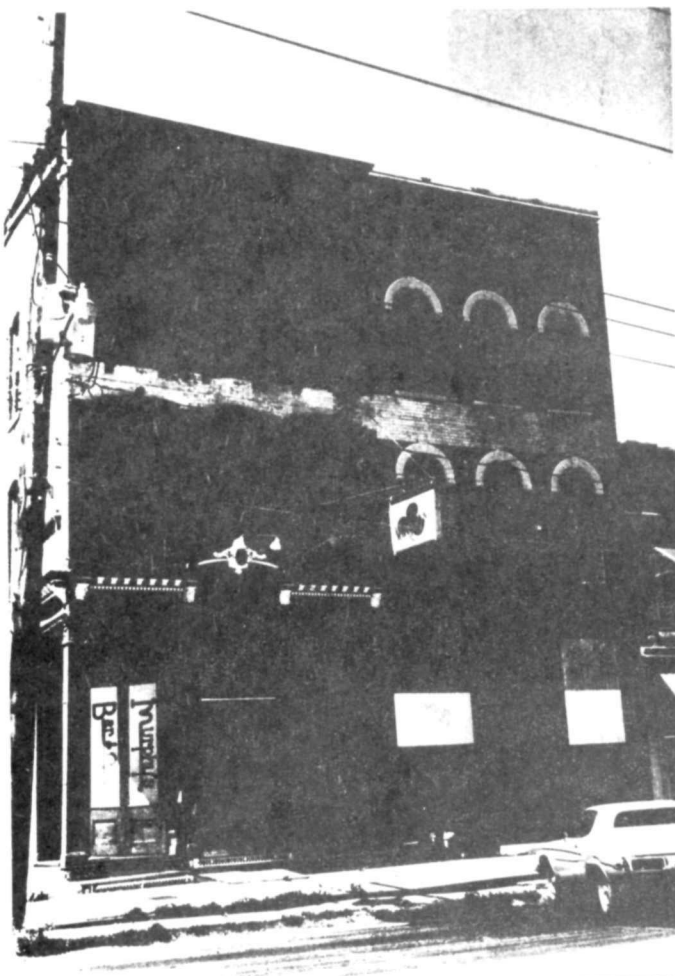
Charles Brunner House
circa 1890
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86



John and Mary Mischke House
1897-1905
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86



1729 Main Street
mid-nineteenth century
Peru, Illinois
M. Stolberg, photographer-6/86

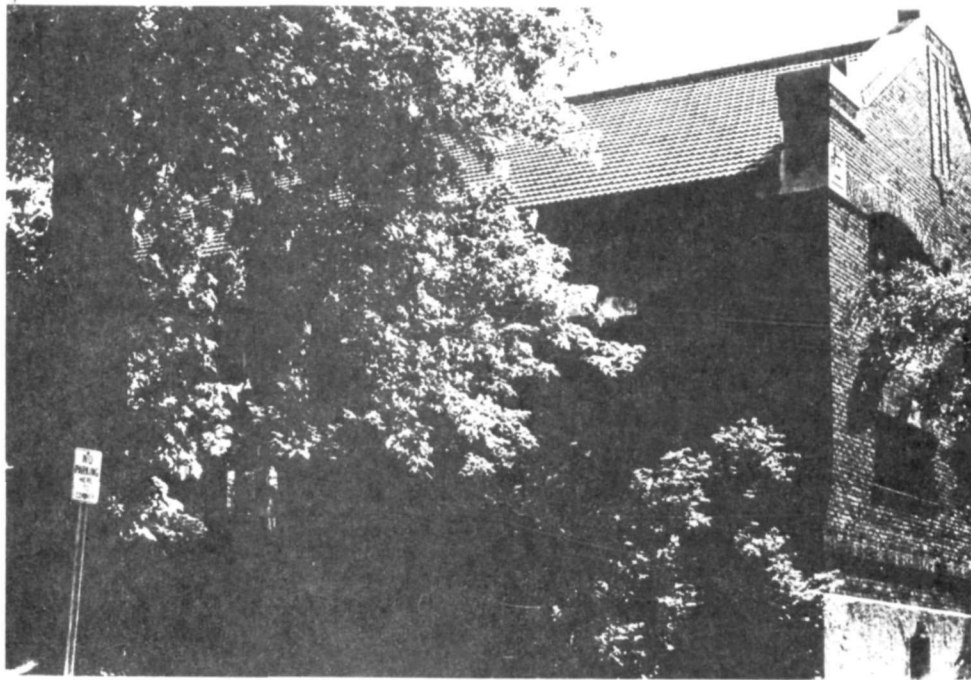


1527-1529 Water Street
pre-1862, circa 1862-1868
Peru, Illinois
E. Miller, photographer-6/86

Peru Theatre
1931
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86

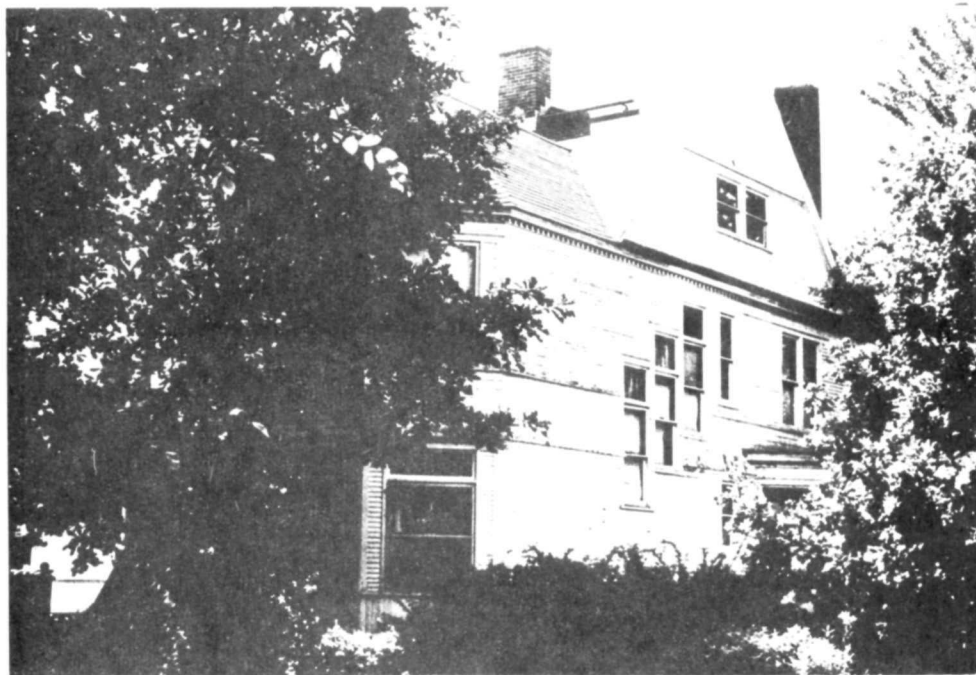


1009 Fourth Street
circa 1855
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86



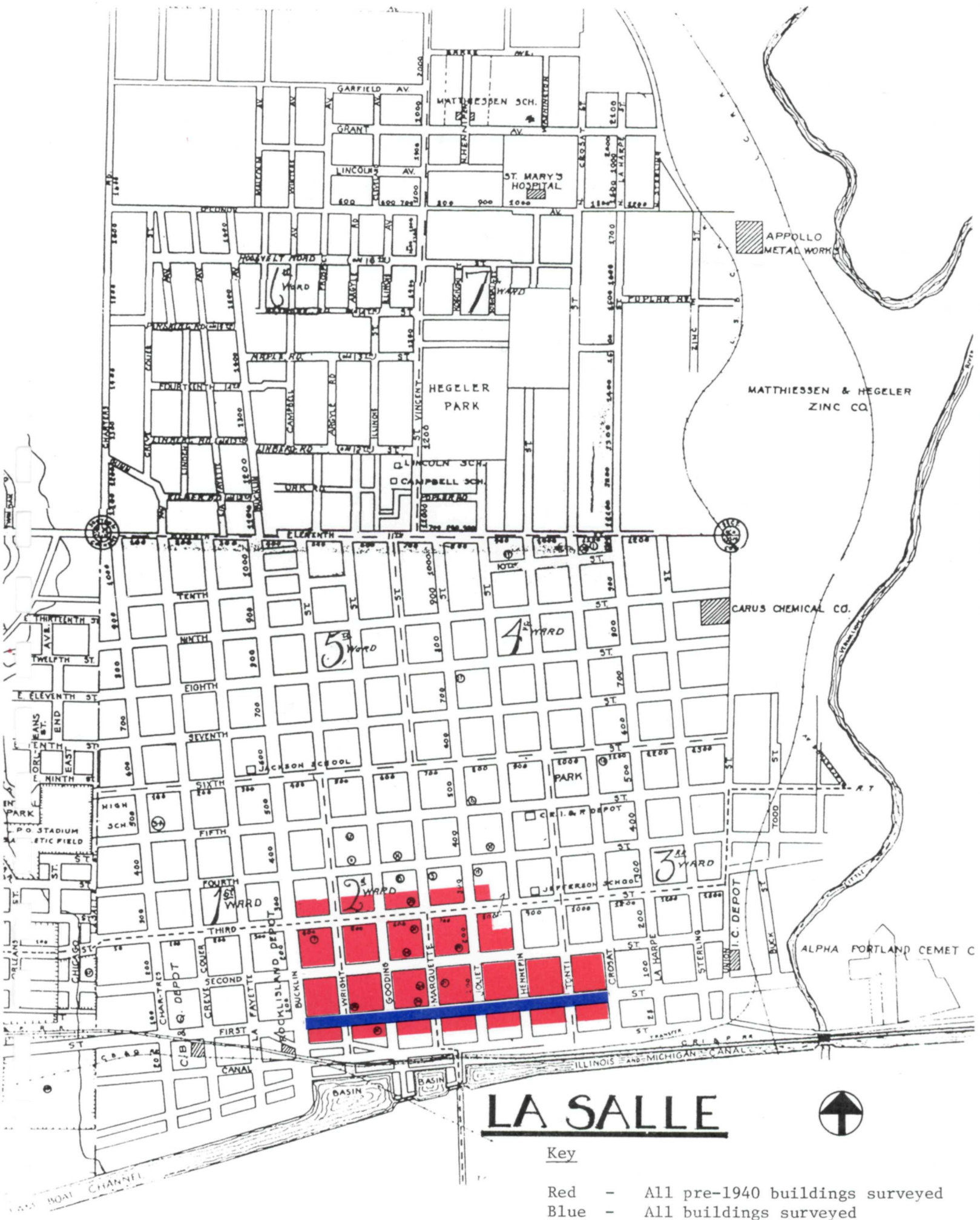
Carnegie Library
1910-1911
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-6/86

1628 Second Street
1892
Peru, Illinois
R. Barber-photographer-6/86



CHAPTER 3

LASALLE: OVERVIEW



LOCATION

The city of LaSalle, platted in 1836, is situated in the middle and western part of LaSalle County, Illinois, atop a bluff that runs along the Illinois and Michigan Canal. Approximately 100 miles southwest of Chicago, the town is bounded by Interstate 80 on the north and the canal on the south. The Little Vermillion River forms the eastern boundary and the neighboring city of Peru, immediately west of LaSalle, establishes a shared corporate limit.

LaSalle was laid out by the Canal Commissioners as the western terminus of the Illinois and Michigan Canal at a point that overlooks the Little Vermillion River on the east and the canal itself on the south. Although early settlers originally perceived the grassy prairie land around the town to be unproductive, it quickly proved to be not only fertile, but rich in natural resources. Of these resources, the large deposits of bituminous coal proved to be especially lucrative. The abundance of this low-grade coal attracted various industries to the area during the 1850s, including the zinc manufacturers who required this fuel ore.

SETTLEMENT

The 1827 federal land grant to the state of Illinois for construction of the Illinois and Michigan Canal encouraged land speculation and settlement along the proposed canal corridor. Alternating sections of land five miles wide situated adjacent to the waterway were to be sold by the state to finance the canal's construction. The first settlers to LaSalle came from the Northeast; farmers were attracted to the region by the fertile soil. One of the earliest arrivals was Samuel Lapsley from Pennsylvania. In 1830 he established a farm where the town now sits, and he erected a sawmill on the Little Vermillion. When canal construction commenced, Lapsley lost the mill and all the improvements located on state-owned land.

Aaron Gunn, another early farmer, came from Montague, Massachusetts, in 1831. The house he built in 1849 (1212 Linden Street) is outside of the survey area, but is worthy of further investigation as one of the few pre-1850 residences in LaSalle. Gunn was regarded as a community leader for many years and his later life was devoted to religious pursuits, as he was an instrumental figure in the organization of the First Baptist Church in 1839.

As plans for building the canal solidified in the 1830s, land speculators were attracted to LaSalle. Dixwell Lathrop, an agent for the Rockwell Land Company of Norwich, Connecticut, purchased land from the state near the proposed crossing of the Illinois Central Railroad and the Illinois River in 1835. He believed this would become the most valuable property in the area, as it was the likely spot for the Canal Commissioners to lay out the town. Rockwell was thus established and the Rockwell Colony, a group of about 200 people from Norwich, arrived in 1838. Lathrop misjudged the location of the canal terminus, however, and the commissioners laid out the town of LaSalle below that of Rockwell. A malaria epidemic of 1838 weakened the presence and

population of this tiny community, whose exact location remains unknown, and it was subsequently absorbed by LaSalle. Today, the only remnant of this settlement is the ruinous Rockwell Cemetery located on the east side of the Little Vermillion River. Further research on this early community -- to determine its whereabouts and architectural influence -- is recommended.

LaSalle was laid out on section 15 of state-owned canal property in 1837, a year after it was decided that it, not Peru to the west, would be the Illinois and Michigan Canal terminus. The Town of LaSalle was originally platted and recorded on June 18, 1838. The original town was bounded by First Street (south), Ninth Street (north), Chartres Street (west) and Sterling Street (east). Jno. B. Preston was the surveyor; William J. Thornton and Jacob Fry appear as representatives of the Illinois and Michigan Canal Commission. This area comprises approximately half of the town as it exists today. Prior to recording the LaSalle plat, the Adams Addition to the town was recorded on February 10, 1838. John McFadden surveyed the southwest fractional quarter of Section 14 of Township 33, which lies east of Sterling Street. James Adams was the proprietor of this property.

Two later parcels of land were platted in LaSalle during the early 1840s. Lapsley's Addition, situated directly north of Adam's Addition at the northwest quarter of Section 14, Township 33, was recorded on December 15, 1841, by George H. Norris, LaSalle County Surveyor; on June 14, 1842, Edward B. Talcott surveyed the area between First Street and the canal, as well as between Creve Coeur Street on the east and Joliet Street on the west.

Streets on a north-south axis were named after the great personages who traversed this juncture between the Mississippi River and Lake Michigan during the last quarter of the eighteenth century -- Jesuit missionary Father Marquette, explorers Louis Joliet, Henri Tonti and Father Hennepin, as well as Creve Coeur, the fort erected by Sieur de la Salle on the Mississippi, named "heart break" for his repeated disappointments associated with the territory. North of Canal Street, the east-west thoroughfares are numerically named, with First (or Main) and Second Streets comprising the transverse core of LaSalle's downtown; the survey area covers the blocks between Bucklin Street on the west and Crosat Street on the east.

Construction of the canal began in 1836 and to alleviate the labor shortage, the Illinois and Michigan Canal Commission advertised in the eastern states and Canada. Irish and other immigrants responded quickly to the promise of high wages of \$20 to \$26 per month. This call for workers resulted in LaSalle's first population influx. By 1838 the town's Irish, French Canadian and German residents had risen to 2,000. Many of these canal laborers lived in crude makeshift cabins along the bluff that would become Main Street.

As the state of Illinois continued to experience financial problems, which culminated in the 1837 financial panic and a temporary halt on canal building, scrip was issued to contractors and laborers by the Canal Board. Inability to cash the canal scrip for its full value translated into a reduction of real

wages. An estimated 80 percent of the canal laborers abandoned LaSalle along with the canal, although many of those who remained -- predominantly Irish -- turned to farming when the state agreed to recognize the scrip as payment for state land. The Irish thus established themselves as a major cultural force in the community.

The development of religious groups in LaSalle paralleled the community's ethnic settlement. The Church of the Holy Cross was founded in 1838 as a mission "to reclaim the (Irish) canal workers from evil ways" (History of LaSalle County, p.290); by 1842 thirty-eight priests were based here. The congregation's long-vanished log structure was built on land donated by the I & M Canal Commission and was the first Catholic church between Chicago and St. Louis. Its successor, St. Patrick's Church (1846-51), is a stunning limestone Classical Revival structure on the northeast corner of Fourth and Marquette Streets. The adjacent brick rectory is a good example of Colonial Revival architecture, but has recently been altered. (A c. 1960 school located opposite the church completes the complex.)

The Baptist Church, founded in 1839, is the oldest Protestant congregation in LaSalle; its first building was located at Fifth and Marquette Streets. A schism arose among the Baptists in 1850, with the present congregation re-establishing itself two years later. The 1856 church was destroyed by fire and replaced in 1865. (This brick building was remodeled with a Romanesque Revival facade and tower in 1910; it was the only religious structure within the HABS/HAER survey boundaries.)

Canal construction resumed in 1845 and the active recruitment of laborers was renewed. Once again, Irish immigrants dominated this new workforce. Up through the 1860s, a large number of laborers and transients resided in boarding houses, such as the Rock Island House, American House, Hardy House and American Hotel, or they lived in multi-family tenements, none of which was identified in this survey. After the canal finally opened in 1848 and the majority of these laborers left the area, LaSalle's population fell off sharply again--to about 200 in 1850. Individual houses were built sporadically among commercial and religious buildings throughout the town except for the four central blocks of First Street. By 1850 there were twenty-five single-family houses situated below Fifth Street, the earliest platted area of town.

LaSalle was officially incorporated in 1851 and with it began a decade of development. The town became a center for the manufacture of raw industrial materials, and a permanent population developed quickly thereafter. The Illinois Central and the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroads facilitated this rapid development, reflected in a population rise to 3,500 by 1855, when the residential section of town was composed of an unprecedented 800 houses.

Reflecting this surge in population, educational and religious institutions became established. The movement toward establishment of public schools in

LaSalle began in 1856 and, the following year, the LaSalle Public Elementary School System was created. Prior to this, education had been the domain of religious and private non-denominational schools. Probably the earliest class was held in the Baptist church building at Fifth and Marquette Streets. Mr. Powell's school, opened in 1853, was located in a two-story building at Fifth and Gooding Streets. St. Vincent's School for Girls was established in 1854 in a two-story brick house on Second Street near Chartres Street. This structure probably remains -- in an altered condition -- on the north side of Second Street. The school moved the following year to a stone house at Fourth and Gooding Streets. The LaSalle Public Elementary School System rented and purchased a number of earlier private school buildings after its establishment in 1857.

The city had been accessible by rail and canal at mid-century, but when the Illinois Central built its bridge over the Illinois River at LaSalle in 1854, it established the lucrative railway hub that would ignite the city's mercantile and residential development and divert it forever from its neighboring Peru.

Ironically, laying the railroad so closely on the heels of completion of the canal in 1848 foreshadowed the shortlived productivity of a water-transport system. Also, the railroads were improved on a regular basis, while the canal was not. From the canal's beginning in 1848 until December 15, 1915, \$6.6 million were generated in tolls against \$5.4 million expended for maintenance, repairs and operations. An early twentieth-century analysis determined that while the canal "has not proven to be the great source of revenue that it was hoped it might be, it must be regarded as having proved on the whole a good investment for the people of the State of Illinois" (p. 140).

Growth and refinement of LaSalle's social, cultural and economic resources were still strong during the latter decades of the nineteenth century, however. Platted additions to LaSalle would add the land between Ninth Street and 24th/27th Streets to the north, which are not organized on a strict grid system as is the earliest-platted land. Actual building occurred at a much slower pace than the addition of surveyed land, and lots from even the initial town plat were being developed during the twentieth century.

The continuous arrival of immigrants prompted the creation of new churches, as well. The Germans founded St. Joseph's Catholic Church in 1871, worshipping in a frame building until the current brick structure was erected in 1905. LaSalle's Polish immigrants first attended St. Joseph's, but established St. Hyacinth's parish in 1875. The congregation's brick church was constructed in 1891-92 at Tenth and Tonti Streets. St. Roch's Church was established by Slovenian Catholics who first arrived in LaSalle in 1895. In 1925 the Temple B'Nai Moshe was built, although a rabbi had served the town since about 1900, and area Italians founded the Holy Rosary Catholic parish.

In 1895 the LaSalle-Peru Township High School Board of Education was created when the School District No. 120 was organized under the township high school

system of Illinois. A three-story brick building known as the "Old Main" was erected at the northeast corner of Fifth and Chartres Streets in 1897. Although this original building no longer exists, significant structures constructed during early twentieth-century expansion of the school remain.

Residential development was represented in the survey by a few exemplary cottage and bungalow styles of architecture, as well as earlier gable-front and square-plan residences, situated north of Second Street and on the cross streets. Approximately six residences, which date from prior to 1888 through the 1920s, are located on First Street at the eastern periphery of the survey district, an area of town that never fully developed.

After the turn of the century, LaSalle's municipal bodies constructed for themselves several distinctive and suitably formal structures -- these represent most of the high-style buildings in the city. The LaSalle City Hall, U. S. Post Office and Public Library are closely grouped within a two-block area on Marquette and Joliet Streets above Second Street. The City Hall, which also houses the fire station, is the only structure in LaSalle listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A dramatic, three-story brick example of neoclassical French eclecticism, this building was designed by Victor Andre Matteson -- architect of the library, St. Mary's Hospital (demolished), and numerous schools in the area. City Hall was erected in 1906 by M. W. Allen and Sons of Peoria and J. M. Dougherty of Ottawa on the site of the original brick, gable-front city hall, which was razed to accommodate the new building.

The LaSalle Public Library, built in 1907 on a design by Matteson, was funded by a \$25,000 grant from Andrew Carnegie. It was the city's fourth library site, but the first building constructed specifically for that use. It is an excellent example of Georgian Revival styling.

Although LaSalle's first post office was established in 1837 on the south side of Main (First) Street between Marquette and Gooding Streets, and later moved to the north side of Main Street between Gooding and Wright Streets, it did not occupy a significant building until the twentieth century. Between 1900 and 1916, it was housed in Turner Hall at Second and Gooding Streets, which burned down about 1920. The present post office was designed by Charles W. Glendele Co. of Chicago and was constructed in 1915-16. It is one of the foremost examples of grandiose neoclassical architecture in LaSalle.

Table 3-1
POPULATION CHANGES
City of LaSalle

| Year | Population |
|------|------------|
| 1850 | 200 |
| 1860 | 3993 |
| 1870 | 5200 |
| 1880 | 7847 |
| 1890 | 9855 |
| 1900 | 10,446 |
| 1910 | 11,537 |
| 1920 | 13,050 |
| 1930 | 13,149 |
| 1940 | 12,812 |
| 1950 | 12,083 |
| 1960 | 11,897 |

INDUSTRY

The construction of the western section of the canal from LaSalle to Marseilles commencing in 1836-7 gave rise to the development of several frame buildings located along the bottom lands of LaSalle. Sawmills on the Little Vermillion provided builders with lumber. Over the next two decades such small-scale industries as blacksmithing, whisky-making, and flour milling dotted LaSalle's landscape.

Because Peru rather than LaSalle had finally been chosen as the terminus of the canal, the opening of the I&M in 1848 did not spark any expansion of industry within the town of LaSalle. However, with the completion of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad in 1853 and the laying of the Illinois Central Railroad through LaSalle in 1855 the town suddenly found itself a center of rail and canal transportation. Significantly, the same year that the Illinois Central began its operations, the LaSalle Shaft, located at Canal and Union streets, was sunk. It was the first coal mine shaft in the area. Spurred by the new transportation systems the bituminous coal industry in and around LaSalle rapidly grew.

Just as the coal mining industry was greatly expanding in the late 1850s two German immigrants, Frederick W. Matthiessen and Edward C. Hegeler, opened a small zinc-smelting operation on the east side of LaSalle. Within two decades zinc production comprised LaSalle-Peru's most lucrative industry. In fact LaSalle, with its numerous smelters along the Little Vermillion and Illinois rivers, soon became known as "Zinc City."

Matthiessen's and Hegeler's zinc operation boomed in the post Civil War years as did the coal mining industry. The population of LaSalle grew from around 200 people in 1850 to about 5,200 in 1870. Between 1870 and 1900 a number of new industrial enterprises were introduced to LaSalle, several by Matthiessen and Hegeler. New or expanded industries included a brick works, a window glass works (operated by Hegeler), a bottle factory, a carriage and buggy factory, and a brewery. Among the most important new manufacturing concerns was that of the Western Clock Company organized out of the defunct United Clock Company in the early 1890s by F. W. Matthiessen. Westclox, as it was soon called, was located just to the west of LaSalle in Peru.

Naturally all of the new enterprises were located close to, or along, established transportation lines. The city's industrialized areas formed something of an "L" shape, extending west to east about one-half mile along the Illinois River and the I & M's steamboat basin, then linking up with the Illinois Central Railroad, and finally running north for about one-half mile to the Matthiessen and Hegeler zinc works. Warehouses along the CRI & P, the adjacent Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, and the Illinois Central bustled with activity. The city, situated on the bluff above the river, was linked to the industrialized bottom land via First Street which, in the vicinity of Bucklin Street, descended steeply down to the rail yards.

In addition to its zinc and coal production, LaSalle, along with nearby Oglesby, became an important center for the manufacture of Portland cement. At about the turn of the century J. Eliel's brewery, in operation near the Little Vermillion since about the 1870s, was superseded by the German-American Portland Cement Company. German-American produced its brand-name "Owl Cement" and quickly found a national market.

Although the I & M Canal had been in steady decline since the 1880s it continued to operate in LaSalle through the 1920s. Modest quantities of coal and grain were shipped along the I & M during its last few years of existence. It was the railroads, however, that formed the city's major transportation arteries. One lifelong resident of LaSalle described the area's rail yards of the 1920s and 1930s as a "beehive of activity" (Walter Menning, interview, August, 1985). Gradually, though, the advent of the automobile and truck eroded the importance of railroad.

The depression of the 1930s stymied any further industrial development in LaSalle. During the Second World War there was some renewed activity, particularly at Westclox and in the electronics industry, but the city never again enjoyed the prosperity it had reached in the 1910s and 1920s. The last of the deep shaft coal mines were closed in the 1950s. By the 1960s all of the area's zinc works including the large M & H operation had ceased operation. Foster Grant, a plastics manufacturer, and Carus Chemical Company superseded LaSalle's and Peru's zinc works. In fact, by 1986 the only major historic industry still in operation was the Portland cement works along the Little Vermillion.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The survey area is composed of the earliest commercial sector, which runs parallel to the canal along the bluff. Here, in 1838, the first land that faced "Main Street" was sold for \$400 to \$600 a lot, expensive compared to the \$100 or so paid for land elsewhere in the city. Commercial growth was scant during this early settlement period. Contractor Philo Lindley opened a general merchandise store, the first within the city limits, to serve other canal laborers. He was followed shortly by the similar enterprises of William Byrne and Isaac Hardy.

It was not until the mid-1840s that legislation was passed to rescue the canal project, which allowed the city of LaSalle and its downtown core to grow and prosper unhampered up to the turn of the century. During this era, "Main Street...was beginning to be graced with some commodious stores for the first time" (History of LaSalle Co. [1886] p.743).

Commercial development was led by the construction of stores and related businesses on the south side of Main Street overlooking the canal, with the oldest blocks located between Wright and Joliet Streets. Benjamin F. DeMerritt's boot and shoe store opened in 1851, "occupying the first and for

sometime the only building on the north side of First Street between Gooding and Marquette (Streets)" (Ibid.). Three years later, he built and occupied the first store on the block east of this, between Marquette and Joliet Streets. A later venture of Isaac Hardy, the Hardy House Hotel, and the massive hotel erected by Francis Harrison, of the same name, were two of the earliest lodging facilities in the city, constructed between 1848 and 1853. Charles Diesterweg, a German boot and shoe merchant, built his two-story brick store in 1863, followed by Henry Grauer, who became the longest resident barber in LaSalle. Similarly, A. G. Haage operated a saloon elsewhere in the city during the early years of the decade, but located his wholesale liquor business on Main Street about 1869.

In 1867 Henry Grauer built for his barber shop the standard 20' x 100' store at 633 First Street. The building still stands, although it is now totally obscured by the aluminum Purity Drug facade. His is one of the few buildings for which a firm construction date exists. The absence of addresses to accompany accounts of the earliest LaSalle merchants renders it impossible to date all but a handful of downtown buildings, although based on an analysis of construction methods and materials, such as random limestone walls versus coursed brick, some speculation can be made. The Sanborn maps of 1888 provide a date by which most of the downtown buildings had been erected. The earliest commercial buildings were gable-front and frame, set along muddy streets; the first plank sidewalks were constructed along First Street. During the 1860s, it was here, too, that the first uniformly two- and three-story brick storefronts appeared. These were constructed of uncoursed limestone rubble walls and faced with red brick. Round- or segmental-topped windows with rusticated stone sills articulated a two- to four-bay facade that was highlighted by brick belt coursing, dentil molding and corbelling. Storefronts occupied the first story, typically with one main entry and a second door that led to the upper stories. Display plate-glass windows held in place with iron supports were framed with clerestory transom windows and metal kick plates; canvas awnings over each window were unrolled to shade displayed goods.

This building type is exemplified by some extant commercial structures that have been only partially altered, although most of LaSalle's finest buildings have been lost to refacing with brick or aluminum panels during the early and mid-twentieth century, respectively. Duffy's Cigar and Tobacco Store at 541 First Street has the city's finest complete facade, composed of ten bays on the upper stories with separate storefronts. John Kable's restaurant formerly occupied the middle three bays, which feature an asymmetrical entry and tiled walls. The upper two stories of the building feature two-over-two-light segmental-arched windows with stone sills and belt courses. A corbelled brick cornice tops the building. A similarly intact storefront is found at 1021 First Street, the site of John Cumming's grocery store for over sixty years. In many cases, just the storefronts have been altered and the upper part of the facade preserved. Such is the case with the Woodworks and Illinois Valley Refrigeration buildings, which are located next to each other on the east corner of the 800 block of First Street. Here, the blind arcades with inset windows, Romanesque-arch motif banding and generous incorporation of brick

detailing are completely intact and probably date to about 1870.

The core of the earliest business district spanned First Street between Wright and Joliet Streets. Development north of First Street was scattered and any commercial development beyond Second Street was scarce; some early commercial enterprises along Gooding Street still exist today, but they originally mingled with dwellings, lumber yards and religious buildings. Saloons, groceries and boarding houses were the three most numerous types of businesses conducted in LaSalle up to the turn of the century, as well as dry goods, drug, meat market and confectionery concerns. Saloons or, in the early years, "sample rooms" that offered a variety of liquors as well as tobacco and food, have always remained a pre-eminent business in LaSalle. Alex McPhedran's Sample Room, for instance, advertised a "billiard hall and restaurant,...choice wines, liquors and cigars always on hand... Oysters served in every season" (1885 City Directory, advertisement).

The block between Marquette and Joliet Streets is one of the best preserved in the survey area and LaSalle. The canal boat basin was located at the foot of Marquette Street, so this thoroughfare was established as a secondary spine of activity and development in LaSalle up through the turn of the century. Zimmerman's Opera House, a formidable building over four stories high with a cupola, occupied the southeast corner of First and Marquette Streets. Next door, a pair of two-story Queen Anne-style buildings that are still intact at 716-18 First Street are unique examples of this predominantly residential style, replete with an oriel, dormers, shingled Mansard roof and pressed-metal ornamental motifs.

On the north side of First Street two massive Italianate buildings anchor each end of the block and represent the highly decorative and formal styling of numerous downtown buildings that date from the 1870s through the turn of the century. George Orsinger's bakery and restaurant at 757 First Street is a two-story, four-bay building featuring round-arched windows with ornate metal hoods that offset the high, projecting metal cornice with paired brackets and modillions. It, unlike Blakely's at the opposite end of the block, retains its stylistic detailing. Blakely's and the LaSalle National Bank Building on the northwest corner of Marquette and First Streets have been greatly altered: the former simply stripped of its ornamentation, the latter reduced to two stories and encased in a contemporary tiled shell. Two other buildings on the north side of the 700 block represent the Italianate styling of this era, but on a more modest scale. The eastern building of the two that today comprise Wobrock's and the adjacent Waterbeds Unlimited building are both two-story brick facades. They feature tall rectangular window openings topped with segmental hoods, above which are recessed panels that contain dentil molding; the storefronts on both buildings, however, have been much altered.

The 1890s witnessed LaSalle's final spurt of commercial growth before the twentieth century, and only a few buildings that date from this decade remain. In 1895, brick storefronts lined both sides of First Street from Wright to Hennepin Streets. Farther east and west of these blocks, commercial

buildings were sprinkled among undeveloped land and private homes. The buildings on First Street between Wright and Marquette Streets all had grand three-story facades, while the balance of this strip was predominantly two stories high. At this time the cross streets of Gooding and Marquette Streets were also fully developed with mercantile buildings, although the land north, east and west of this was largely residential.

The 1890s era of building in LaSalle is epitomized by the Merchant's Block series of stores and offices located on the east side of Marquette Street between First and Second Streets. This block-long development, erected c. 1891, features turreted corners, stepped pediments and canted oriel bays. The schematic combination of brickwork and pressed metal was complemented by a similar block constructed across the street at about the same time. Similar facade treatment was given to the first building situated across the alley that runs through this block -- including a turret and stepped pediment roofline -- to create a planned and cohesive commercial unit. All but the Merchant's Block segment has been razed. The last hotel built in LaSalle, the Vendome (ca. 1892-98) at 540 First Street, is stylistically similar, with its molded brick arches and arcade motif, as well as molded cornice detailing and metal grillwork.

The last significant commercial spurt witnessed by LaSalle occurred during the first quarter of the twentieth century, and it was linked to development of the state highway system. In 1911, only 10 percent of Illinois roads were of a permanent nature. State aid for road construction was allotted in 1914, but it was not until 1919, and shortly thereafter, that federal funding was dramatically increased and ample roads were built countywide. About 95,000 passenger cars were registered in Illinois in 1913; this increased to about 400,000 in 1918 and to over 1 million by 1925. The popularity of the touring vehicle created a demand for repair, gasoline and service facilities, a building type that flourished in LaSalle at this time. Garages sprang up on the eastern and western peripheries of LaSalle. The Central Garage (c. 1900-06) at 451 First Street is a large two-story, steel-supported brick building with a handsomely articulated facade highlighted by a Tudor-arch entryway. Remnants of the rear auto ramp, on which cars reached the upper story, are still intact. A one-story brick building with a center arch and flanking windows, also a former garage (c. 1906-10), across the street at No. 444, is in equally good condition. Several brick garages also appeared in the eastern edge of the survey area -- the 900-1000 block of First Street -- during the 1920s. These are plain one-story service buildings embellished only with simple brick coursing, with multiple entries for people and automobiles, as exemplified by the "30-car" Reinke Motor Sales Building (1926) on the corner of First and Hennepin Streets.

A number of filling stations that provided only gasoline and oil -- as opposed to full-service garages -- were established on First, Second and Third Streets. Feeney's (1926-28), at the corner of Tonti and First Streets, is a very good stuccoed example of the hipped-roof house type with extended shed; Deach's Garage (1921), at the intersection of Third and Joliet Streets, is an

exceptionally grand version of this form, but with a diagonal shed porch, flat roof and terra cotta detailing. Starved Rock Gas and Oil Co. (ca. 1925) at Second and Bucklin Streets, and Volpe's (1936) on Joliet Street between First and Second Streets, however, exemplify the romantic cottage form; both filling-station models are typical of those built during the 1920-30s. None of these facilities is far from the main thoroughfares: Canal Street, which ran along the water to Peru; First Street, the commercial core; Marquette Street, a major road unto itself and the primary access to Fifth Street/Route 6, which was the cross-country precursor to the interstate highway system.

Several large buildings were erected to house established commercial enterprises, although a variation in the form suggests that function had an influence on design. The Herrcke family, whose hardware concern was established in the mid-nineteenth century, in 1925 erected a new store at 443 First Street, where today it remains completely unchanged, inside and out. This massive brick building featuring a stepped pediment was constructed using hefty I-beams, should the family have decided to add a third level or use the space as a garage. The LaSalle State Bank, founded in 1880 and housed in a frame building on the southwest corner of First and Marquette Streets, in 1925 erected LaSalle's most classically styled structure on the same site; unaltered today, this Doric temple-front building represents a design scheme common to financial institutions. The now-Turk Furniture retail store and warehouse (1924) at Second and Joliet Streets occupies a quarter of the block with its monumental three-story form, obviously designed under the influence of the regularized, multi-windowed, commercial buildings of Chicago.

LaSalle and its visitors supported approximately a half-dozen hotels and boarding houses during the last half of the century -- including the Hotel Harrisson, Commercial Hotel and LaSalle House -- all of which were located on First Street, west of Marquette Street. The last one built here was the Kaskaskia Hotel (1913-15) on Marquette Street, north of Second Street; it is also the only lodging facility still in operation today. At five stories, it is the tallest structure in the city, built of red brick with white wood trim of late Italianate/Colonial Revival derivation.

There was little commercial development in LaSalle from the 1930s onward, a decline probably related to the closing of the Illinois and Michigan Canal in 1933, in addition to other factors. The city witnessed its first population decrease, from 13,149 in 1930 to 12,812 in 1940. With the end of Prohibition in 1933, however, saloons no longer operated under the euphemism of "soft drink" vendors, and these and related gambling concerns flourished.

Although illegal, gambling proliferated in LaSalle, supporting the abundant and related tobacco, liquor, food and lodging businesses. Travelers arrived by car or via the Rock Island Rocket from Chicago for a Saturday night's revelry in such numbers that the streets of LaSalle are said to have been standing-room only. There was wall-to-wall entertainment along First Street, at the core of which was the 500 block and the Kelly and Cawley liquor/gambling house (No. 641). LaSalle, the "Little Reno of Illinois,"

boasted clubs such as Tinny's Silver Congo Lounge, the Gay Mill, the Cotton Club and Club 359, and attracted big-name performers like Donald O'Connor. With between sixty and eighty saloons in LaSalle from 1940 to 1950, this continued to be the town's primary commercial enterprise, as it had been during the nineteenth century.

After World War II attention turned to domestic matters, and various local parties joined forces to eradicate the "victimless crime" of gambling. Tom Cawley himself testified in 1950 at a Chicago hearing intended to confirm the link between gambling and organized crime, one of a series of testimonies spearheaded by U.S. Senator Estes Kefauver (Tenn.) who chaired the U.S. Senate Special Committee to Investigate Crime in Interstate Commerce. Cawley, unlike other subpoenaed "witnesses" who refused to speak for fear of self-incrimination, honestly divulged the gaming practices in LaSalle. This media event, coupled with the election of an ardent, do-gooder LaSalle County Sheriff in 1952, led not only to Cawley's demise that same year, but also to the eventual shutdown of most of LaSalle's similar entertainment halls.

The commercial sector of LaSalle has since been in a decline and the historic architectural flavor of the downtown core subsequently lost. After the turn of the century, arcuated brick facades and metal storefronts were reclad with plain yellow or dark brick. A steadily rising vacancy rate began, one that has escalated in recent decades. During the 1950s and '60s, many buildings were further altered with incompatible materials: aluminum sidings and facade finishes, enameled metal panels, and synthetic simulations of stone and brick. Other structures were removed completely, only to be replaced with poorly scaled and designed one-story commercial buildings. This trend continued into the 1970s and '80s, with even more buildings being razed to accommodate parking lots and new intrusive structures that do not blend with what remains of late nineteenth-century LaSalle. Ironically, because the downtown never expanded much beyond its original plan -- abetted by a general twentieth-century decline and the construction of a 1970s shopping mall four miles away along the interstate -- the oldest and grandest core of the city has been the most obliterated. Currently, the integrity of well over half of the town's historic structures has been lost, or the building has been removed entirely.

Table 3-2

BUSINESSES IN LASALLE - 1858-1960

| BUSINESSES | 1858-59 | 1876 | 1885 | 1905 | 1920 | 1930 | 1940 | 1951 | 1960 |
|--------------------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Saloon | 15 | 40 | 33 | 59 | 52 | 20 | 66 | 76 | 59 |
| Grocery | 19 | 23 | 23 | 38 | 39 | 63 | 43 | 48 | 27 |
| Dry Goods | 3 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 2 | - | - |
| Dept. Store/5&10 | - | - | - | - | - | 7 | 8 | 6 | 6 |
| Boots & Shoes | 9 | 10 | 9 | 10 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Butcher | 6 | 7 | 14 | 12 | 15 | 22 | 17 | - | - |
| Lodging* | 13 | 18 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Contractor** | - | 8 | - | 26 | 24 | 26 | 24 | 22 | 25 |
| Confectioner | 4 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 7 | 6 | 4 |
| Theater | - | - | - | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Doctor/Physician | - | 8 | 9 | 17 | 17 | 21 | 20 | 17 | 17 |
| Automobile: Dealer | - | - | - | - | 8 | 10 | 9 | 11 | 9 |
| Service Sta./Gas | - | - | - | - | - | 32 | 46 | 33 | 31 |

NOTE: The merchants included in these figures were located both inside and outside the HABS/HAER survey area and therefore do not reflect directly the downtown commercial makeup. This tabulation of the types of merchants in LaSalle is also approximate, based on city directory listings, and should be used only to glean a general idea of the proportion of one business type to another. The categories of businesses that appear, change and disappear over time are represented, with some explanation.

* Lodgings: the earliest two listings include boarding houses, in which many laborers and miners lived; as the number of private homes increased toward the 20th century, only hotels are reflected in the tabulations.

** Contractors include men engaged in the profession of painting, carpentry, cement, roofing and plastering.

METHODOLOGY

Planning

The survey area is composed of the downtown core of LaSalle, primarily the First Street commercial strip which is located along the north side of the Illinois and Michigan Canal. It is bounded on the west by the east side of Bucklin Street and extends east to include both sides of First Street up to Crosat Street. Between Bucklin and Joliet Streets, the survey area extends between the south side of First Street to the north side of Third Street; between Joliet and Hennepin, the survey area is contained between First and Second Streets. The survey as a whole was composed of the oldest commercial and residential areas of LaSalle, as they were established north of the Illinois and Michigan Canal from the 1840s onward; a total of 166 structures was cataloged.

Research

Research was conducted to establish dates of construction and histories of each structure based primarily on published sources (see general bibliography). The public libraries in LaSalle and Peru provided most of the resources for historical background on LaSalle. These include city directories from 1858-59, 1876 and 1885-86, which list the names of merchants and their business type, but do not identify specific addresses. The later directories, a smattering from the first two decades of the twentieth century and at least three per decade thereafter, are more specifically useful in tracking a sequence of occupancy; most of the city directories are located in LaSalle Public Library. Two locally produced histories of LaSalle County provide general and unsubstantiated accounts of early development, prominent families and industrial development associated with the canal. In addition, a special seventy-fifth anniversary edition of the LaSalle Daily News-Tribune (July 1927) provides a plethora of informative articles, advertisements and photographs that highlight to a great extent the business community and, to a minor degree, residential activities.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps provided the bulk of survey information used to date the buildings. These were obtained from the Library of Congress for the years 1888, 1892, 1898, 1906, 1911 and 1926. In addition, Sanborn Maps often reveal data on the materials, dimensions and decorative features of each structure.

City and county records were either unavailable or time did not permit their extensive use. The legal description and owner of each property were obtained from the County Tax Assessor's office in Ottawa. Property tax records for the city of LaSalle exist in an unindexed ledger in City Hall. Other city records and non-municipality documents have apparently been removed to the Illinois Regional Archives, part of Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, but this library was unable to locate them.

Additional secondary and visual evidence for chronicling the evolution of the LaSalle survey area was obtained from a variety of sources. An 1895 bird's-eye view of LaSalle is in the possession of local attorney J. Paul Aplington. Another area resident, Phil Klabe1, is a local history buff who has amassed a sizeable collection of antique postcards and photographs that depict LaSalle, Peru, Marseilles, Ottawa and other towns in the county; these proved extremely useful, and he happily shared his collection with the survey team. Other sources included the National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the City Hall building and newsletters published by local banks over the years, as well as on the occasion of their 100th and 150th anniversaries.

Fieldwork

Two surveyors were assigned to LaSalle and proceeded according to the methodology outlined above. A total of 166 structures were surveyed, approximately 75 percent commercial, 25 percent residential. Some seventy-seven of these were found to predate 1888. The results appear in Table 3-3.

Finally, the buildings were evaluated and categorized according to the methodology above.

TABLE 3-3

LASALLE SURVEY RESULTS

Dates of Construction of Surveyed Buildings

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Commercial</u> | <u>Residential</u> | <u>Public</u> | <u>Religious</u> | <u>Industrial</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Pre-1888 | 62 | 14 | | 1 | |
| 1888-1900 | 9 | 10 | | | 1 |
| 1901-1920 | 16 | 8 | 3 | | |
| 1921-1940 | 28 | 2 | | | |
| Post-1940 | <u>11</u> | — | — | — | — |
| Totals | 127 | 34 | 3 | 1 | 1 |

Buildings Surveyed: 166

RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the rating system developed for the I & M Survey (explained in Introduction), three buildings were found to qualify as Category I. All Category I buildings should be considered for listing on the National Register; the only building in LaSalle currently listed on the National Register is the City Hall, 745 Second Street. The Category I buildings in the area of LaSalle that was surveyed are listed below, and photographs of them follow. The abbreviation for the historical themes into which these buildings fell are included; the themes are explained in the general methodology above.

LaSalle City Hall, 745 Second St. (Pm)
Merchant's Block, 144-64 Marquette St. (Cm)
LaSalle Public Library, 305 Marquette St. (Em)

All pre-1940 structures situated outside the survey area should be inventoried. A cursory windshield survey of structures outside the survey area revealed twenty-nine sites of obvious architectural and historical interest that merit further research. Although more contemporary than the pre-1940 survey period, LaSalle also contains two examples of Lustron houses -- distinctive prefabricated residences constructed inside and out of square, enameled metal panels. These date from after World War II, but as a shortlived and unique architectural type, they are worthy of further study.

Residential

Baker Street and St. Vincents Avenue
1305 Bucklin Street
434 Crosat Street
1024 Fifth Street
728 Fourth Street
731 LaFayette Street
*1212 Linden Street
812 MacArthur Road (Lustron)
*735 Marquette Street
*1232 Marquette Street
*921 Ninth Street
Second between Creve Coeur and Chartres
*1306 Seventh Street
*1307 Seventh Street
530 Sixth Street
716 Sixth Street
1207 Sixth Street
608 Tenth Street
618 Tenth Street
1027 Tenth Street

Commercial

1053 Eighth Street
First and Union Streets
959 Ninth Street

Institutional

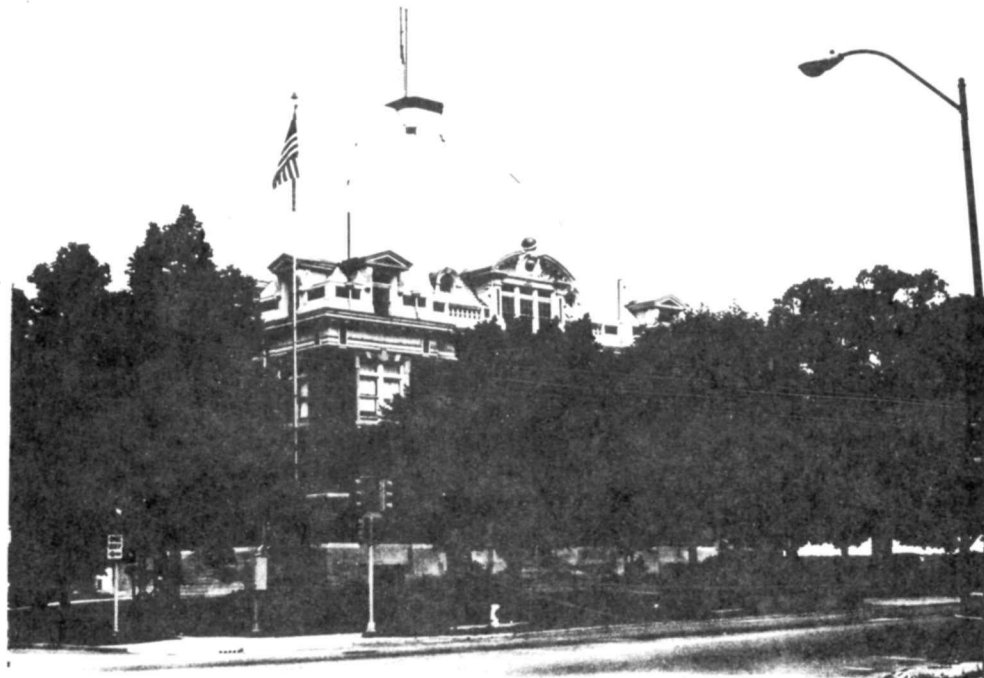
LaSalle-Peru Township High School, Chartres between Eighth and Ninth
St. Hyacinth's Catholic Church (church and school), Tonti and Tenth
Streets
St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Fourth and Marquette Streets
St. Roch's Catholic Church, Sixth and Crosat Streets

* Structures identified by the Illinois Department of Conservation Survey, 1972.

In addition to these single structures, a cohesive district of residential, commercial and industrial buildings was identified on the west side of the Little Vermillion River, also outside the survey area. The area is comprised of numerous houses built on a north-south axis at the heart of which is the Carus compound: this area extends from Porter Avenue south to Fourth Street; along Zinc, Sterling, Todd and Central Streets. The houses here are uniformly small, gable and frame, built on stone foundations. Most have been somewhat altered or added; however, they represent a cohesive body of dwellings, probably occupied by laborers. The Carus property contains at least two significant small factories/industrial structures from the first quarter of the century that feature considerable decorative brickwork, hollow-tile roofs and similar vernacularized styling. This district merits further investigation.

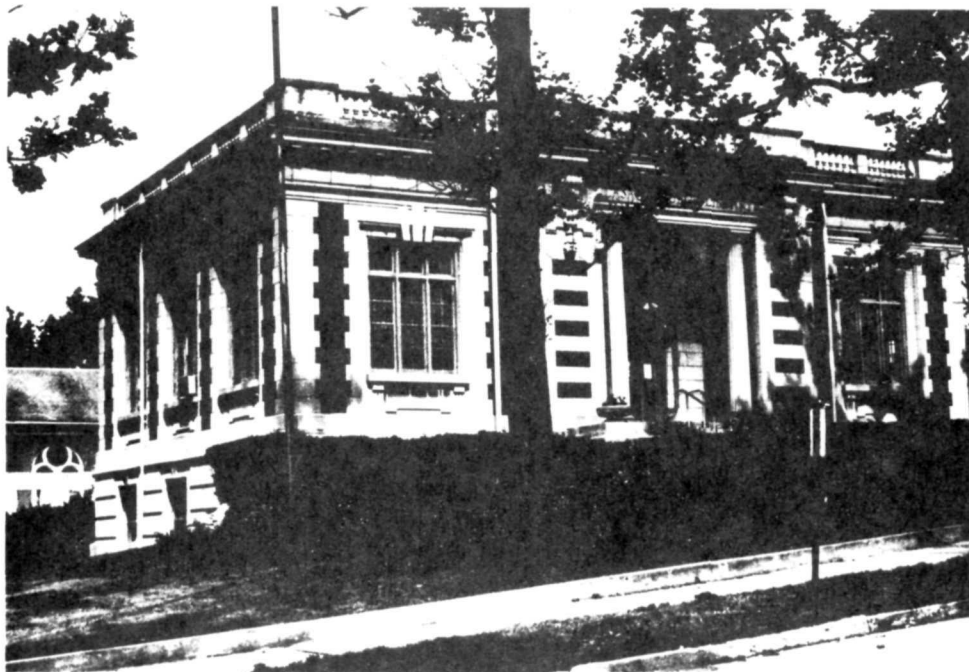


Merchant's Block
circa 1890
LaSalle, Illinois
S. Leach, photographer-6/86



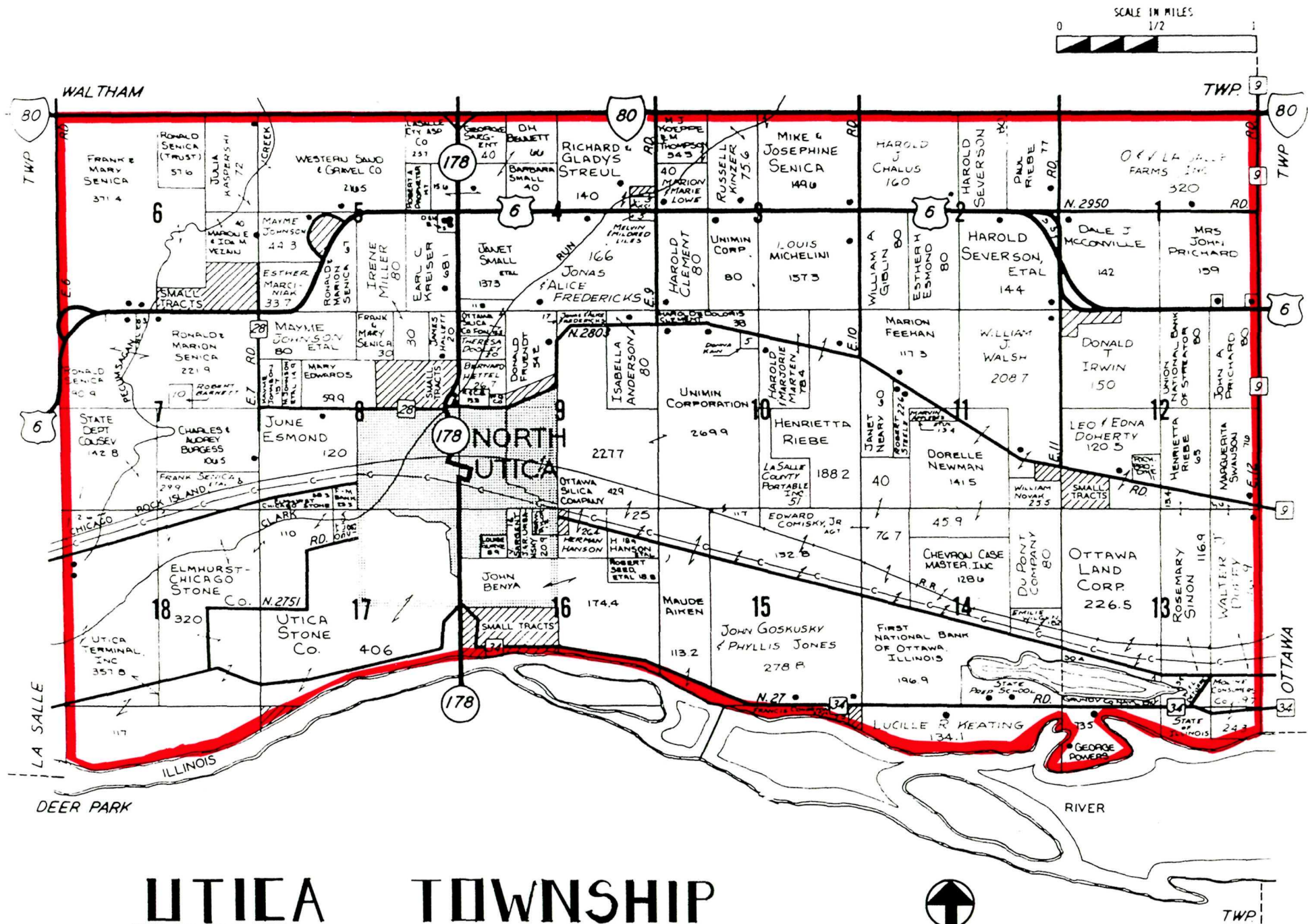
City Hall
1906
LaSalle, Illinois
J. Turner, photographer-6/86

LaSalle Public Library
1907
LaSalle, Illinois
J. Turner, photographer-6/86



CHAPTER 4

UTICA: OVERVIEW



LOCATION

Utica Township, encompassing twenty-one square miles, is centrally located in southern LaSalle County. Covering six miles from east to west, it is bounded on the north by Interstate 80 and on the south by the Illinois River. The township is bisected by two other waterways, Clark's Run, which runs north/south through the center of the township, and the Pecaumsaugin Creek, which runs north/south through the west half. A strip of well-timbered, fertile bottom land parallels the river. Large deposits of St. Peter's sandstone and hydraulic lime are found in this section of the township. A bluff extending east to west about one mile north of the river divides the bottom land from the fertile prairie to the north. The Illinois and Michigan Canal and Rock Island and Pacific Railroad cross the township at the base of this bluff.

The present town of Utica, also known as North Utica, is situated in the corners of Sections 8, 9, 16, and 17 in the western half of the township, one mile north of the Illinois River. Its commercial core is on Mill Street, which runs through the center of town on a north/south axis. The survey area is defined by the Rock Island and Pacific Railroad on the north and the I & M Canal on the south.

SETTLEMENT

Utica was not settled until after the Black Hawk Indian War (1831-1832). With the elimination of the Indian threat, pioneer farmers and early industrialists were drawn to the rich bottom land along the Illinois River. They were further attracted as well to the abundant timber, traditionally connoting fertile soil. The area boasted an abundance of potential water power for the establishment of saw and grist mills. Local histories suggest that this was the westernmost point for year-round steamboat navigation on the Illinois River, which provided some early market possibilities. The indefinite plans of the I & M Canal from 1822 until 1836 also made the area ripe for speculation.

Simon Crosiar, the first settler in Utica Township, established a claim in 1833-34 by erecting a saw mill and carding machine on the Pecaumsaugin Creek in Section 7. The mill was located on what became the Amasa O. Crosiar farmstead, and foundations and even a dilapidated wheel from the mill are rumored to exist. The following year Crosiar established another claim one mile south of present Utica, on the banks of the Illinois River. Here he opened a warehouse and store, and established a dock for transporting commodities to and from St. Louis and points between. Crosiar was followed by a small number of pioneer farmers and merchants from the eastern seaboard, Kentucky, and Ohio, who staked claims around this small port. Among these early pioneers was one of Utica's most important settlers, James Clark, who came from England to Ohio and then to Utica Township, where he claimed Section 17 by 1835.

George E. Walker, an early settler and merchant, purchased property for speculative purposes at the 1835 land sale in Ottawa. The land was then surveyed by George H. Norris, deputy county surveyor, and a plat for the original town of Utica filed in the LaSalle Recorder's Office on November 16, 1836. Thomas Brown soon constructed a small frame building in which he opened a store; in another frame structure George W. Armstrong conducted a tavern.

During its heyday in 1836, Utica boasted four frame buildings that housed two stores, a warehouse and a tavern. In the 1827 survey, old Utica had been designated the terminus for the canal, the greatest stimulus to the growth of this town. In the 1836 canal survey, however, the path was moved north. Local histories explain that the canal's path was shifted north and the terminus moved west to Peru in exchange for a Peru representative casting the deciding vote in favor of the Canal Act. A more logical explanation for shifting the canal path is that old Utica, like Peru, was a private land development and, if the terminus were located on these towns, the Canal Commission would not profit. In contrast, LaSalle, the actual terminus of the canal, was a creation of the Commission and thus would provide it with a profit. In either case, relocating the canal isolated old Utica from any means of profitable water and rail transportation to necessary markets and the town was abandoned.

With the beginning of construction on the canal in 1836, a number of Irish laborers set up cabins along the canal in what is now North Utica, one mile north of the first town. A large vein of hydraulic lime was discovered in 1837 during preliminary excavations for the canal. Hydraulic lime, when ground and heated, makes natural or hydraulic cement. Norton and Steele, Canadians who had made cement for construction of the Lawrenceville canals, established a mill to produce the cement needed for the canal locks and dams. In 1838, they built a mill and stone kilns at the foot of the bluff, near the future site of the Rock Island Railroad. The Norton and Steele Company was the first cement plant in Illinois and only the third in the United States at the time. When canal construction ceased in 1841-42 due to financial difficulties, the Norton and Steele Cement Company closed. In 1845, when canal construction recommenced, the aforementioned James Clark, by then a contractor, purchased the cement company and began producing cement for the canal as well as for the general public. Originally called the James Clark Cement Company, the name was later changed to the Utica Hydraulic Cement Company. Clark and his company provided the foundation for the development of North Utica.

After the canal was finished in 1848, Clark constructed a stone warehouse on the north bank of the canal. The warehouse (now the LaSalle County Historical Society) was used to store grain, and served as Utica's first post office and general store. From this building most commercial activity in Utica was conducted; agricultural commodities and necessities were transported to and from the canal. At this time, the town probably resembled a construction compound -- dominated by the newly finished canal at the south, the cement company grounds to the north, and the houses of the canal and cement company laborers lined up between.

Utica was organized in 1850. Yearly elections were held for the positions of supervisor, clerk, assessor, collector, constable, and two administrators of highways. The town was finally surveyed and platted by supervisor Hiram Higby in 1852. The original plat included four blocks from the Rock Island Pacific Railroad (then under construction) to the canal, extending west from Clark Street (now known as Main) to West Street. The Rock Island Pacific Railroad was completed the following year, and Clark erected a new stone warehouse on the grounds of his cement company. The town of Utica was defined and the stage set for permanent development.

Utica was incorporated in 1867. Before 1888 a frame, two-story building was constructed to house administrative offices and a jail: its height and belfry denote its importance to the community. Only minor alterations, including asbestos siding, have been made to the building, located on Mill Street. Other civic buildings such as the local post office and library are located in modern structures.

Utica's success has been based on the surrounding natural resources, including hydraulic lime, clay, sandstone, and fertile land. With the canal providing markets early in the town's development, natural resource industries were stimulated from an early date. Development in Utica peaked in about 1880 and lasted through the second decade of the twentieth century. The Utica Sewer Pipe and Terra Cotta Company, established in 1863, was the largest of its kind in the state in the 1880s. Utica Fire-Brick Company manufactured bricks from 1882 through 1928. St. Peter's sandstone has been mined and shipped from Utica since the 1860s, and it remains a major industry in the community. Utica's growth depends on a delicate balance between these industries (which are extractive rather than manufactured) and preservation of the surrounding resource-laden land.

The turn of the century marked Utica's commercial and residential peak, with the population reaching 1,000. At least three cement companies and three grain elevators operated here. By 1905 the interurban Illinois Valley Railroad, a division of the Chicago, Ottawa & Peoria Railroad, operated in Utica. The Utica Sewer Pipe and Terra Cotta Company, then the only business of its kind in the state, was generating \$50,000 worth of business annually. During this period, the Utica Electric Light Company was constructed and electricity introduced to the town. Farming had become mechanized, thereby increasing productivity, and corn was becoming a specialized crop. Agriculture and industry in and around Utica stimulated a boom in commercial development.

Table 4-1

CENSUS CHART

POPULATION -- UTICA TOWNSHIP

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Population</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 1850 | 252 |
| 1860 | 992 |
| 1870 | 1154 |
| 1880 | 1273 |

Table 4-2

CENSUS CHART

POPULATION -- TOWN OF UTICA

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Population</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 1880 | 767 |
| 1890 | 1094 |
| 1900 | 1150 |
| 1910 | 976 |
| 1920 | 1037 |
| 1930 | 1120 |
| 1940 | 1019 |
| 1950 | 985 |
| 1960 | 1014 |
| 1970 | 974 |
| 1980 | 1067 |

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Because Utica was essentially a creation of the canal, its commercial development was merely an extension of two factors: the cement industry and the potential markets for agricultural products. Permanent commercial development began in Utica after the canal was completed. The original commercial core was located on Canal and Clark streets in the 1850s. Utica was then a small industrial and agricultural center, boasting two cement companies and a grain warehouse. The latter, called the James Clark Warehouse (1849), was actually the first commercial structure in Utica. Early commercial buildings probably extended west from this building, parallel to the canal.

In 1858 a frame building was constructed on the west side of Clark Street between Church and Canal streets, in what is now the vacant lot between the blacksmith building and the welding shop. This structure housed James H. Pearse's lumber and grain store. It was joined by a frame structure in which William Simmons operated a tavern. On April 8, 1859, James Clark made the first addition to the original plat of Utica, encompassing the six blocks from Mill Street (west) to Oak Street (east), and Grove Street (north) to Canal Street (south). Clark's warehouse and his addition are the only remnants of this early period of commercial development.

By the 1860s industry and agriculture began to stabilize and both the railroad and the canal connected Utica with markets in the East, West, and South. This newly stable atmosphere prompted the local business community to settle down, and Utica developed a more cosmopolitan air. During this period, simple frame structures were built to house necessity-oriented stores. A frame duplex, constructed on the northwest corner of Clark and Canal streets, was occupied by H. W. Higby's Old Reliable Drug Store and Edward Taylor's general store. By 1867 John Holeman's hardware store was housed in a frame building on the north side of Canal Street. Opposite Holeman's on the south side of Canal Street, Dennis Lynch operated a dry goods store, and a butcher shop was established here by James Donaldson sometime during the 1860s. The first commercial building was also constructed on Mill Street. It housed a barber shop for J. P. Hazel.

In the 1870s, the commercial core began to shift to its present site on Mill Street. The north side of Clark Street featured a drugstore, a post office, two general stores, and two grocery stores. A hardware store and a saloon comprised the north side of Canal Street and a dry goods store and a saloon, the south side. Businesses on Mill Street at that time were oriented toward industry and service. They included C. C. Perin's Wagon Shop on the southeast corner of Mill and Grove streets (where the Utica Public Library now stands), Edmond Fitzgerald's harness shop, and A. D. Sparham's construction firm. In 1873 Peter Cosgrove opened a saloon on Mill Street. All of these frame buildings were located between Church and Canal streets. At the intersection of the I & M Canal and Mill Street, Clark's warehouse stood on the north bank and Henry Wild's grain elevator on the south bank.

In 1874 James Clark subdivided the western half of the fourth block of his addition to Utica -- between Church and Canal streets -- which had remained undeveloped. On the northeast corner of Mill and Church streets he erected a massive two-story, limestone and brick Italianate commercial building with cement produced by his company. One of the first tenants was Higby and Brigg's Drugstore; a theatre was located on the second story. This building now houses Bickerman's Hardware Store and anchors Utica's present commercial area, just as it originally did. Although the structure no longer maintains its original appearance, it is the only remnant of this early period. Three frame buildings were constructed on Mill Street during the 1870s, housing the Learned & Holland Drugstore (1877), J. E. McGuire's General Store (1877), and A. C. Stage's Barber Shop (late 1870s), but they have been demolished.

During the 1880s the wedge-shaped block contained by Clark and Canal streets was annexed to Utica by H. S. Gilbert & Co. James Clark's fourth addition -- a block bound by Church Street (south), the Utica Hydraulic Cement Company (north), Mill Street (east), and Clark Street (west) -- was added to Utica's commercial core. The town henceforth began to assume its present appearance. As buildings were gradually constructed along Mill Street, the commercial structures along Canal and Clark streets were deserted.

In 1882, John Holcomb's Hardware and E. E. Taylor's General Merchandise stores moved from Clark and Canal streets to Mill Street. The hardware store was located in the middle of the block between Church and Canal streets, and the general merchandise store on the southeast corner of Church and Mill streets in Clark's commercial building. Dr. K. W. Leland also opened a drugstore in a frame building on the west side of Mill Street, south of Church Street. By 1888 most of the commercial structures on Clark Street were vacant. Of the eight buildings on Clark Street, four were empty and one served as a residence. The remaining buildings included a general store, carpentry shop, and blacksmith shop. The general store and the blacksmith shop are two of only three buildings that today occupy the lower block of Clark Street, a virtual alley and parking lot.

In comparison, Mill Street boasted eighteen commercial buildings, six on the west side and twelve on the east. These buildings housed three general stores, three saloons, two drugstores, two dry goods and grocery stores, two meat markets, and a restaurant, bakery, barber shop, clothing, hardware, and flour and feed stores. Only six of these buildings, however, were constructed of brick or stone. In 1888, Mill Street probably had the same quality and quantity of commercial businesses that it now does, but the streetscape was dominated by one- or two-story frame structures rather than the present brick buildings. The only structure that remains on Mill Street from this period of development is No. 149. Originally built as a saloon, its subsequent uses include a restaurant, store, and tavern. It is currently a florist shop.

The period between 1890 and 1900 witnessed the construction of most of the brick and stone structures that now stand along Mill Street. In 1891 seventeen brick or stone buildings stood on Mill Street. Eleven of these,

constructed during the 1890s, still remain. Businesses on Mill Street, from the canal to the railroad, included five general stores, four saloons, three butcher shops, three restaurants, two drugstores, two liverys, two banks, two barber shops, a hardware store, furniture store, cigar store, harness shop, blacksmith shop, printing shop, hotel, cobbler shop, agricultural implements store, and the city hall and jail.

The variety of Utica's commercial enterprises changed little from the 1890s through 1915; it was a self-sufficient business center and marketplace for the surrounding township. Very little new construction occurred after 1915. On average only one building was constructed per decade from 1920 to the present in the area surveyed.

As the automobile began to allow people to travel to LaSalle/Peru and Ottawa for necessities, Utica became less self-sufficient. At the town's 1952 centennial, the business community was composed of four taverns, three service stations, three barbershops, three grocery stores, a general store, gift shop, butcher shop, cleaners and dry goods store, restaurant, drugstore, garage, pool hall, blacksmith shop, and grain elevator. Yet the population was virtually the same as in 1900.

Little change has occurred since 1952. The Utica Elevator Company currently operates with a one-million bushel capacity of grain. The Philadelphia Quartz Company, one of the few existing industries in Utica, employs fifty. Utica is otherwise a bedroom community for surrounding cities. The current vacancy of a number of buildings in the commercial core indicates that the town no longer needs to be self-sufficient.

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE

No houses were contained in the survey area, but three residences were inventoried because of their historical or architectural merit. The Amos Griffin Mansion on Lincoln Street, built ca. 1882, is an excellent example of Italianate architecture. This two-story building is the only stone residence in Utica, as well as the only Italianate structure in town. Griffin was an entrepreneur and influential local citizen. The James Clark house, built in 1845, maintains no resemblance to its original appearance. The upper two stories of this three-story mansion were removed by the current owners in 1945. All outbuildings were also demolished except for the original stone carriage house. The Norman J. Cary house was built in 1902. It is a frame, two-story Queen Anne-style structure with aluminum siding and replacement windows.

The remainder of Utica's residential areas feature modest frame structures. A windshield survey indicates that further study would determine the role of the residential areas in the development of Utica.

AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS

Utica Township was settled primarily because of its agricultural potential. After the Indian threat was eliminated in 1832, settlers from the eastern seaboard, Ohio and Kentucky, were attracted to the area by its fertile, well-timbered bottomland along the Illinois River. Claims began to be established in 1834, to be purchased at the land sale in Ottawa the following year. The majority of land was probably bought speculatively, with only a few squatters purchasing their claims. From 1834 through 1848, when the canal was completed, farming in Utica Township could be described as pioneer subsistence. Markets were distant and difficult to reach and transporting commodities depended on the Illinois River. Farms likely consisted of a small number of improved acres providing diverse products; surpluses were carted to Utica and sold to townsmen. Farming was prosperous from 1833-34 until the panic of 1837. The period from 1837 to 1843 witnessed little immigration and development. Construction on the canal had ceased and, despite low farm product prices, Irish canal laborers used their devalued canal scrip to purchase agricultural land in Utica Township. It is probable that farmers had previously clung to the well-timbered and watered areas close to the Illinois River, Pecaumsaugin Creek and Clark's Run, because the prairie was thought to be infertile. Wheat and corn were staple crops, although oats, hay, potatoes, turnips and buckwheat were also cultivated. No verifiable cultural resources remain from this early period.

The Illinois and Michigan Canal had a tremendous influence on agricultural settlement on Utica Township. As early as 1822, a canal that would open up markets in the east and west had been discussed. The development of steam navigation on the Great Lakes facilitated immigration to the area and the prospect of the canal insured available markets, attracting yeoman farmers. Unlike other parts of the country, no substantial woodsman pioneer period occurred in Utica Township. The Indian presence kept settlers out and, when this threat was removed, land speculators and farmers quickly bought up land.

The canal's opening in 1848 allowed for the immediate development of diverse, commercialized farms. The period from 1842 through 1850 witnessed a large increase in immigration to LaSalle County, forcing farmers onto the prairie lands they had previously avoided. Agriculture on prairie grassland fostered the development of the livestock industry because the land was thought best suited for pasture. A deeply cutting steel plow was also needed to cut through the thick layer of prairie sod, encouraging the immediate development of a more mechanized farming.

Agricultural schedules for Utica Township from the Federal census are included in Table 4-3. Little correlation exists between the names of farm owners listed in the 1850 directories and census records (which list farm operators without indicating whether they owned the land). The records also show a large amount of unimproved acreage as compared to later censuses, suggesting that speculative land holding was considered more profitable than commercial farming. The census schedules further indicate that farms were diversified,

although corn was somewhat emphasized. The vast number of markets made available by canal transport allowed farmers to protect themselves from specialized losses.

By the time the 1860 census was conducted, canal markets were well established. The Rock Island and Pacific Railroad had begun to run through the township and open up even more markets. Local agriculture was enjoying a boom. Access to markets, new farm machinery and agricultural science combined to stabilize prices and increase production.

The correlation between farm owners and operators had increased by 1860, suggesting that commercial farming was displacing speculative land holding. No verifiable historic structures were found from this period, although the Amasa O. Crosiar farm dates from the 1850s or earlier. The agricultural schedule for 1860 indicates that Crosiar owned 300 improved and 440 unimproved acres, unusually large holdings for its period. He was primarily a livestock farmer, with fourteen horses, thirty milk cows, forty other cattle, and fourteen swine. He also raised 600 bushels of wheat, 2,000 bushels of Indian corn, 700 bushels of oats, one bushel of peas and beans, 100 bushels of Irish potatoes, 200 bushels of barley, 100 tons of hay, 1,200 pounds of butter, and 180 pounds of cheese. Another significant farm from this period is the Cornelius W. Esmond Farm #1, purchased as an 80-acre property in 1855. By 1860 the Esmond farm consisted of 140 improved and 20 unimproved acres. Esmond was a diversified commercial farmer: he owned seven horses, six milk cows, twelve other cattle and five swine, and produced 300 bushels of wheat, 200 bushels of corn, 200 bushels of oats, fifty-seven bushels of Irish potatoes, forty tons of hay, 800 pounds of butter, and 100 pounds of cheese. The township's only smokehouse and one of its original one-and-a-half-story linear-plan houses were surveyed here.

The agricultural schedule from the 1870 census indicates that the Civil War had caused the number of farmers in Utica Township to decline to twenty-six. Family farms remained undivided and the average farm size increased. Despite fewer farmers, production also increased, in part because of the stimulated war economy and new farming technology.

Despite the effects of the Civil War, the 1860s were a boom period for agriculture in Utica Township. Seven houses, one barn, and two drive-through corn cribs remain from this decade and are among the earliest farm structures surveyed. With its gable roof and foundation of stone piers, the barn was used to house both livestock and grain. The corn cribs are small rectangular buildings with a foundation of stone piers and a gable roof with loft; individual cribs are separated by an aisle for machinery. These early farm buildings and one of the three one-and-a-half-story linear-plan houses are found on the D. A. Bennett Farm, established ca. 1868 and still owned by the family. According to the 1870 schedule Bennett farmed 120 improved acres. He owned \$300 worth of machinery and five horses, three asses and mules, three milk cows, and four swine. He produced 15 bushels of spring wheat, 763 bushels of corn, 1,000 bushels of oats, 30 bushels of Irish potatoes, eight tons of hay, and 380 pounds of butter.

The 1860s mark the second building wave that swept through Utica Township. This productive decade witnessed the construction of bigger and more elaborate farmhouses to accommodate growing families, thus supplanting the basic one-and-a-half-story linear-plan houses. It is possible that only three of these original houses still exist in the township. The more traditional and purely functional farm outbuildings did not reach obsolescence at the same time and thus did not suffer the same fate.

The 1880 census schedules for Utica Township indicate that farm growth had begun to stabilize during the 1870s, although the number of farm operators had increased to fifty-eight. Three houses, three barns, and six corn cribs date from the 1870s, the last figure indicating that corn was beginning to emerge as a staple crop in the township.

No agricultural schedules from Utica Township were available after 1890, so dating the emergence of today's specialized farm is difficult. The leveling trend apparent in the 1880 census data indicates that farmers were beginning to concentrate on corn and oats, eliminating wheat and decreasing the number of cattle raised. Between 1890 and 1910 the largest number of corn cribs were constructed and their architectural form changed. Cupolas were added to the roofs of the standard drive-through crib so conveyors could load increased amounts of corn through the roof. Half the corn cribs surveyed sported cupolas. This change in form suggests that, as they were aided by new machinery and a more scientific approach to agriculture, farmers began to specialize in the production of feed grains. Additionally, a number of barns were constructed with gambrel roofs to accommodate larger lofts and increased production. Another revealing figure is that at least three grain elevators operated in the township during this period. Of the farmsteads surveyed, seven barns and nine corn cribs were constructed between 1910 and the 1920s. By the mid-1920s, soybeans had been introduced to LaSalle County. Despite this trend toward specialization and the construction of larger and more efficient barns and corn cribs, the spatial organization of the traditional farmstead and number of outbuildings probably changed very little. Although farms were becoming more commercialized, they remained relatively self-sufficient until at least World War II.

Since World War II, increased mobility and mechanization have permitted larger farms and fewer farmers. Farms no longer need to be self-sufficient, which often causes the deterioration or even demolition of specialized outbuildings. The Quonset hut has been introduced to the farm landscape, as has the multipurpose pole barn. A large number of farms are still family-operated, but houses are being abandoned, and part-time or non-resident farmers are raising corn and soy beans on otherwise deserted properties.

Survey results indicate that today's model farm sits on eighty to 100 acres of land. The farm yard is square or rectangular and contains four to seven outbuildings adjacent to the road. The rectangular, frame, two-story gable-roofed house with additions and aluminum siding fronts the farm yard and faces the road. The transverse-frame or midwest three-portal barn sits behind

the house with its primary axis running north/south. It has a concrete foundation and is covered with flush horizontal board siding. The drive-through corn crib with concrete foundation and cupola also sits behind the house and faces the same direction as the barn. Miscellaneous outbuildings sit behind the house within this rectangular area. Cultivated and fallow fields define the edges of the farm yard.

Table 4-3
AVERAGE FARM IN UTICA TOWNSHIP
from Agricultural Census

| | <u>1850</u> | <u>1860</u> | <u>1870</u> | <u>1880</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| No. farmers | 41 | 49 | 26 | 58 |
| Improved land (acres) | 70 | 152 | 370 | 129 |
| Unimproved land (acres) | 154 | 70 | 30 | 18 |
| Horses | 3 | 5 | 7 | 6 |
| Milk cows | 2 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| Cattle | 5 | 10 | 14 | 7 |
| Sheep | 1 | | 2 | 10 |
| Swine | 7 | 6 | 7 | 16 |
| Wheat (bushels) | 230 | 183 | 36 | 47 |
| Corn (bushels) | 481 | 1070 | 1430 | 2532 |
| Oats (bushels) | 103 | 148 | 289 | 120 |
| Potatoes (bushels) | 82 | 179 | | |
| Hay (tons) | 24 | 34 | | |
| Butter (pounds) | 60 | 486 | | |

METHODOLOGY

Planning

As in other towns along the I & M Canal, Utica's commercial core was selected for inventory. All buildings on Mill Street and on the east side of Main Street between Canal Street and the railroad tracks were surveyed. Additionally, three of the finer houses were surveyed.

In addition to the town survey, the entire township of Utica was surveyed, in order to include agricultural buildings in the survey process. The township survey focused on pre-1940 rural structures, including houses, barns, corn cribs, and other outbuildings.

Research

Sanborn Insurance Maps were an important source of information for structures in the town. For the farmsteads, plat atlases, which recorded the location of houses, were used.

Several local research facilities were particularly useful. The LaSalle County Historical Society Museum has a local history collection, farmers' directories, plat atlases, and photographs. At the Utica Public Library, the local history collection, the newspaper collection, photographs, and tax assessor's records were useful. In addition, the librarian, Beverly Pleskovitch, proved to be a good source herself. Tax records at the Public Library included ledgers for 1850, 1861, 1863, and 1871 which were invaluable for tracing land ownership, as they antedated the earliest available plat atlas. The tax records in the Supervisor of Assessments office, LaSalle County Courthouse, provided the legal descriptions of the sites and the names and addresses of the current owners.

Fieldwork

Two surveyors were assigned to the town survey, and two to the township. The survey proceeded along the lines of the general methodology, explained in the overview, above, except that the field form designed for commercial and residential buildings proved to be unsuitable for rural buildings. A new field form was devised. A total of 30 commercial buildings and three residential buildings were surveyed in the town; 39 farms were surveyed in the township.

Finally, the structures were evaluated and categorized using the system explained in the general methodology section above.

Table 4-4

UTICA SURVEY RESULTS

Dates of construction of surveyed buildings

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Commercial</u> | <u>Residential</u> | <u>Farm Houses</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| pre-1870 | 0 | 1 | 7 |
| 1870-1880 | 1 | | 4 |
| 1880-1890 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| 1890-1900 | 14 | | 7 |
| 1900-1910 | 4 | 1 | 8 |
| 1910-1920 | 2 | | 1 |
| 1920-1930 | 1 | | 1 |
| 1930-1940 | | | 1 |
| 1940+ | 6 | | |

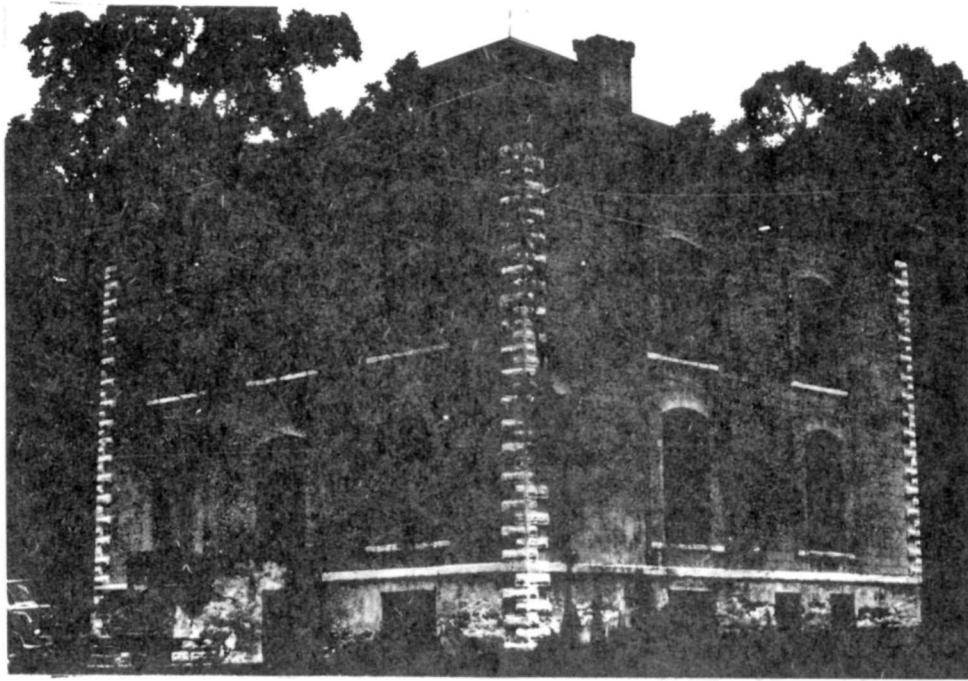
| <u>Date</u> | <u>Barns</u> | <u>Corn Cribs</u> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1850-1870 | 1 | 2 |
| 1870-1890 | 9 | 6 |
| 1890-1910 | 7 | 6 |
| 1910-1930 | 13 | 9 |
| 1930-1940 | | 1 |

RECOMMENDATIONS

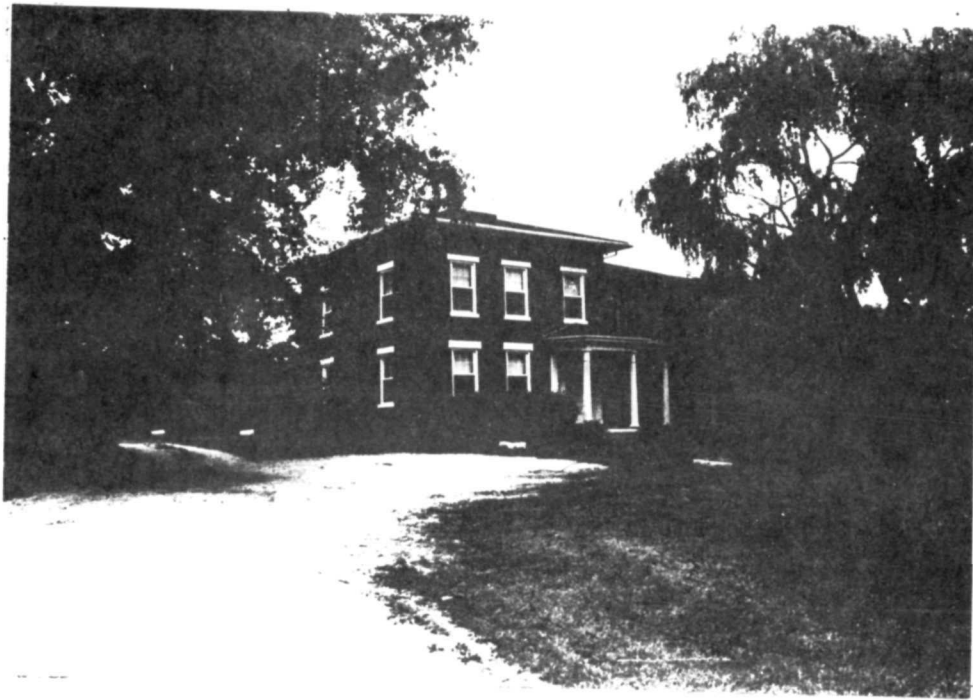
Using the rating system developed for the I & M survey (explained in Introduction), seven buildings were found to qualify as Category I. All Category I buildings should be considered for documentation to HABS/HAER standards, and may be eligible for listing on the National Register. The Category I buildings in the area of Utica and Utica Township that was surveyed are listed below, and photographs of them follow.

Utica Post Office, Mill Street
Duffy's Tavern, Mill Street
Village Office, Mill Street
Amos T. Griffin Mansion, 318 W. Lincoln Street
Cornelius Esmond Farm I, Rte. 6
G. A. Bennett Farm, Rte. 178
Isaiah Strawn Farm (Brodine Farm), N. 2803 Road

All pre-1940 buildings in Utica town should be inventoried. Particular attention should be given to religious buildings as visible symbols of ethnic communities.

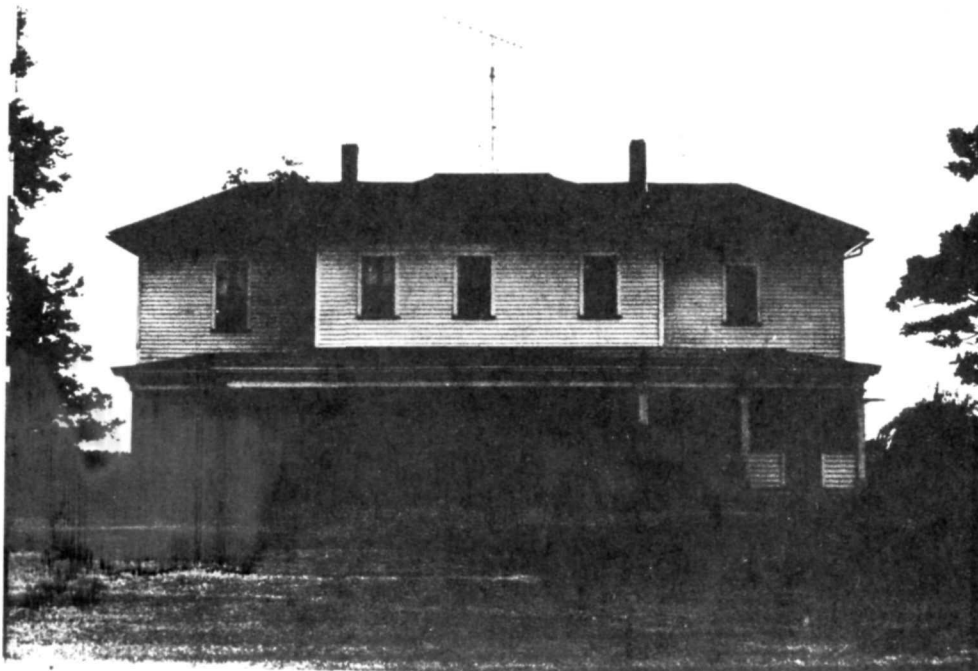


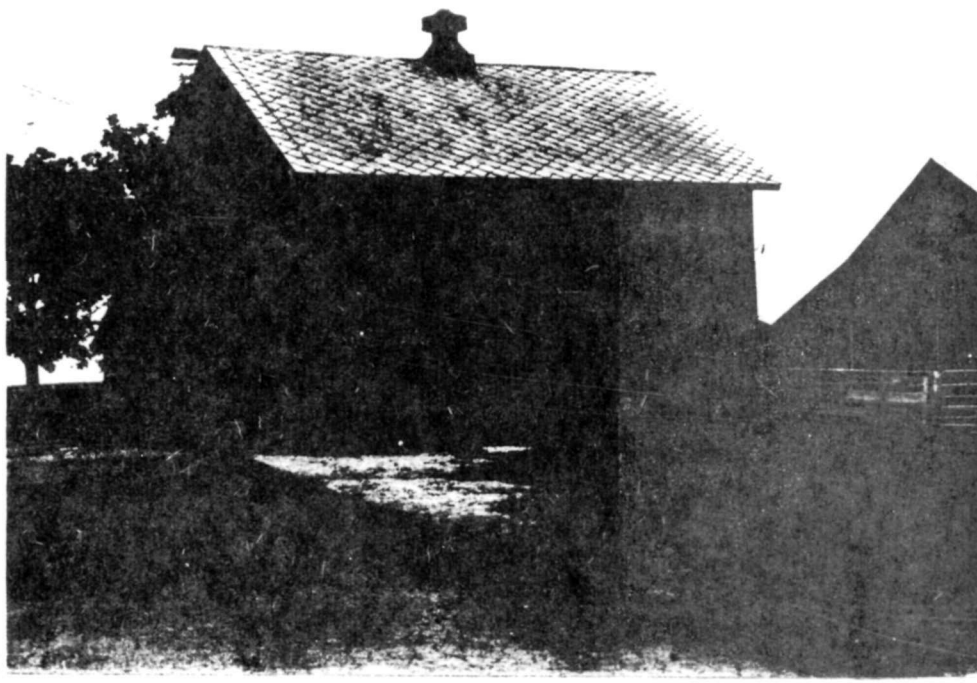
A. Griffin House
circa 1882
Utica, Illinois
P. Shaffer, photographer-6/86



I. Strawn Farm
pre-1876
Utica, Illinois
D. Neary, photographer-7/86

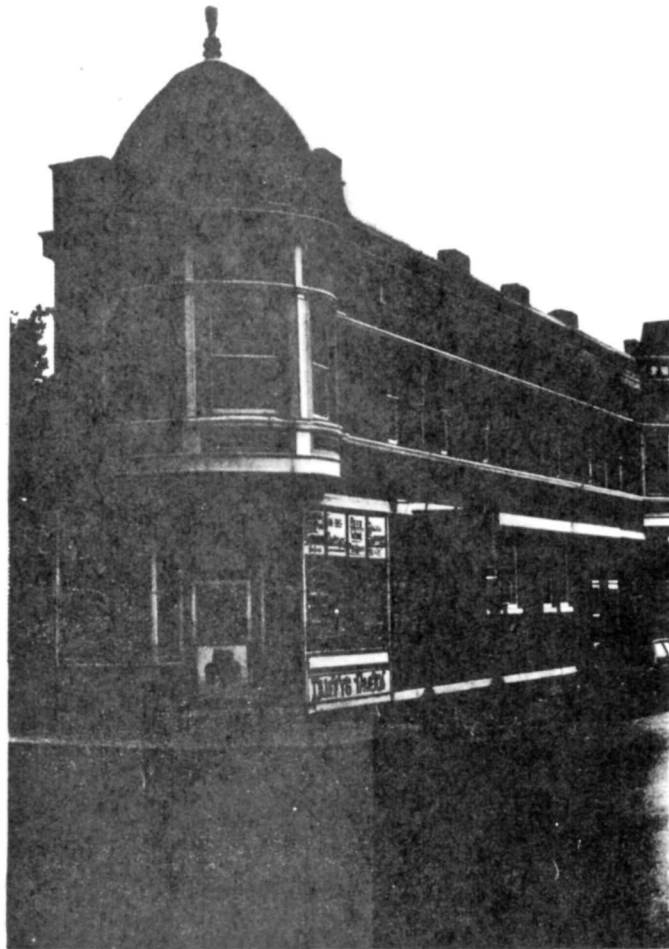
C.W. Edmond Farm
circa 1860
Utica, Illinois
P. Shaffer, photographer-7/86





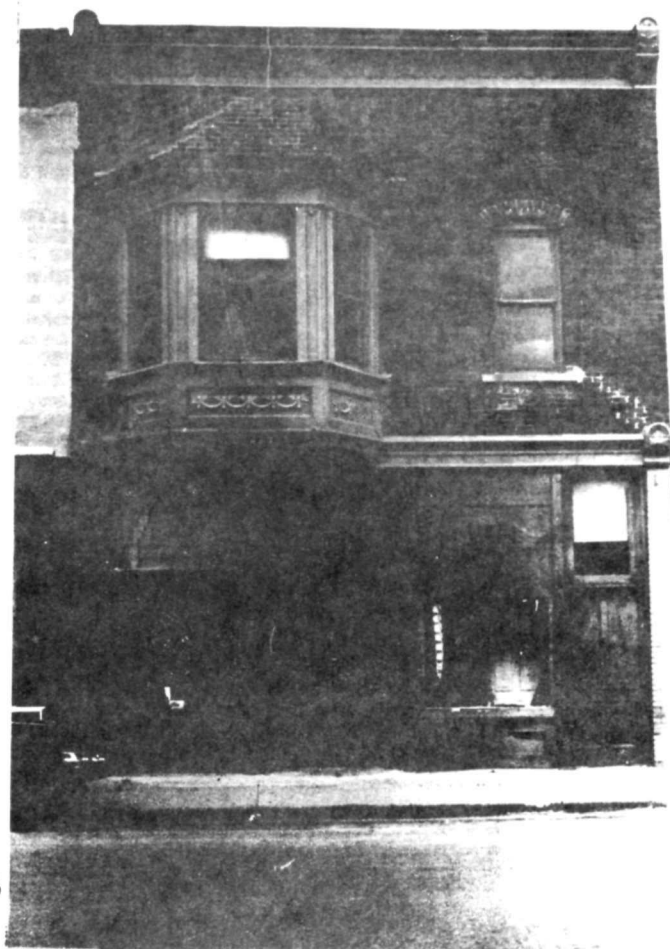
G.A. Bennett Farm
circa 1868, circa 1900
Utica, Illinois
D. Neary, photographer-7/86

Duffy's Tavern
circa 1892
Utica, Illinois
P. Shaffer, photographer-6/86





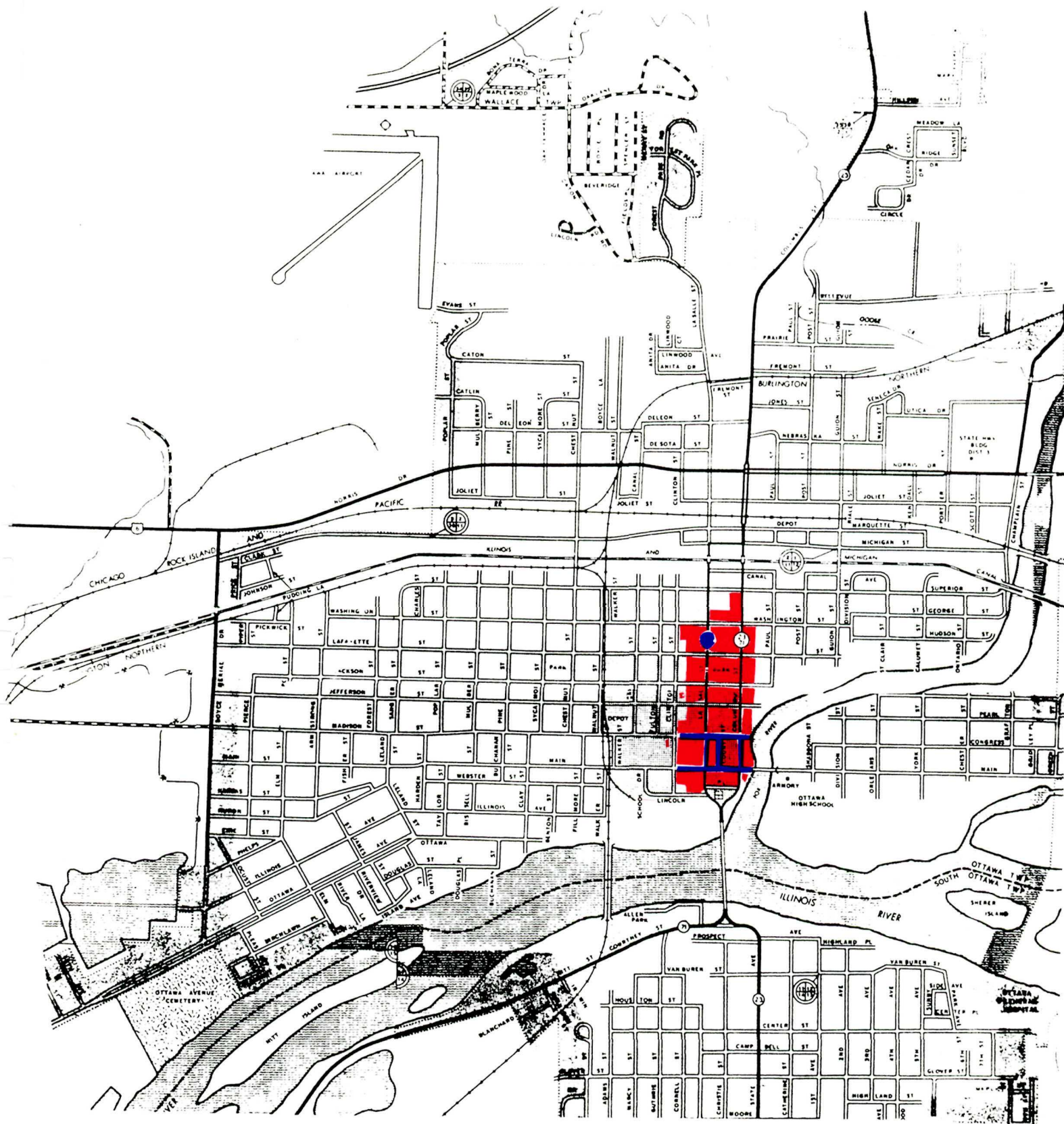
Utica Village Office
pre-1888
Utica, Illinois
P. Shaffer, photographer-6/86



U.S. Post Office
circa 1905
Utica, Illinois
P. Shaffer, photographer-6/86

CHAPTER 5

OTTAWA: OVERVIEW



OTTAWA



Key

- Red - All pre-1940 buildings surveyed
- Blue - All buildings surveyed

LOCATION

Ottawa is located eighty miles southwest of Chicago at the junction of the Fox and Illinois Rivers. The earliest section of Ottawa prospered south of the Illinois River between 1830 and 1837, but thereafter development took place north of the Illinois River on both banks of the Fox River. Today the city is situated predominantly between the Illinois River and the I & M Canal twelve blocks north; and between Boyce Memorial Drive (west) and Green Street (east). South of the river a predominantly residential section of town is bounded by McKinley Road (south), Adams Street (west) and Ninth Street (east).

Ottawa is situated in south-central LaSalle County in the heart of the Illinois River Valley. The land features hardwood forests and pastures, highlighted in the town proper by the south bluff, whose 20- to 100-foot-high sandstone cliffs provide a dramatic prospect of the Illinois River as it meets the Fox (named after the Indian tribe) River, which descends 172 miles from Sussex, Wisconsin.

SETTLEMENT

The news that the U.S. Congress had virtually guaranteed construction of the I & M Canal--the result of an 1827 land grant--encouraged land speculation and settlement along the canal corridor. As much of the wooded and more desirable regions of the Illinois River Valley became settled, the prairie along the canal route became increasingly attractive. The land grant, signed by Congress on March 2, 1827, turned 284,000 acres over to the state of Illinois. Consisting of alternating sections of land along the proposed canal route, the property was to be sold to incoming settlers and speculators, and the revenues used to finance the canal's construction.

Before 1830, there was sparse settlement in what is now South Ottawa, on the south side of the Illinois River. The first white settler in Ottawa is believed to have been Dr. Davidson (or Davison), a Virginian who erected a log cabin on the south side of the Illinois River "nearly opposite the west end of Buffalo Rock" in 1823 (Ottawa Old and New, p.3). Little else is known about this man, who died in 1826, and no evidence of his homestead remains. Thomas R. Covell, an Indian trader, also lived here, near the Creek that for some time bore his name. Covell left the area by 1833, however. Horace Sprague, the first school teacher to the area, arrived from Massachusetts in 1825. He established the first school in South Ottawa the same year, although he moved to Galena shortly thereafter. Dr. David Walker, who arrived in 1826, is credited as the first permanent settler and the forefather of many important Ottawans. He and his son George erected log and frame dwellings on the south bluff between 1826 and 1831; these served as an Indian trading post, and a residence and the first courthouse, respectively. In 1827 an Indian scare prompted residents to erect a stockade--Fort Dayton--on the south bluff, although no danger ever materialized. James Day, a New Yorker, platted the

original town of Ottawa in 1832, which was located south of the river to Van Buren Street. This residential and commercial development attracted settlers from New York and eastern states in particular, who believed Ottawa "favorable and promising."

The area immediately north and south of the Illinois River and west of the Fox was first platted by Chicagoan James Thompson in 1829 or 1830; it was recorded in Mackinaw, the seat of Peoria County, of which Ottawa was then part. LaSalle County was divided from Peoria County in January 1831, and Ottawa was immediately selected as the county seat because of its convenient location on the two rivers, then the head of steamboat navigation during high water.

In 1837 Ottawa was officially incorporated as a township and the area north of the Illinois River superseded South Ottawa in steady commercial and residential development. The construction both of the canal and courthouse on the north side of the river doomed South Ottawa to stagnation. Central Ottawa, north of the Illinois River and below the I & M Canal, was predominantly platted by 1840, and it would be a decade before further land would be annexed. The towns north and south of the Illinois River were not joined until 1853.

With the establishment of Ottawa as the county seat, county officials were chosen and improvements enacted. George E. Walker was elected the first sheriff; David Walker, county clerk; David Letts, road supervisor; William Seeley, school commissioner; William Richey, tax assessor; Moses Booth, coroner. John Green, James B. Campbell and Abraham Trumbo served as the first county commissioners. Also mandated at this time was a ferry (45 by 9 feet) to serve river traffic, for which only non-county residents were charged a tariff; and the first county road, leading from Ottawa to the eastern state line. A year later a mail route was established from the center of the state to Chicago via the Fox River.

The first LaSalle County Courthouse was built in 1834. This frame building was succeeded on the site in 1841 by a Neoclassical structure designed by William Flagg. This Roman temple was two stories high and measured 50 feet by 60 feet with a tower atop the pedimented six-column portico. It was used until 1881, when moved and incorporated into McCalab & Gosney's livery on LaSalle Street. The present stone courthouse, designed by M. L. Beers of Chicago, was erected in 1881. This massive four-story building measures 84 feet by 150 feet, and features a rusticated Romanesque facade with Italianate detailing. It cost about \$127,000 and originally housed the public library and other municipal offices.

From 1857 through 1897 Ottawa was also home to the Northern Grand Division of the Illinois Supreme Court. A five-man commission -- William Reddick, Joseph Glover, George E. Walker, William H. Walker and Henry F. James -- selected the site and oversaw construction of this regionally important building. The elegant one-story Roman Neoclassical structure was erected on Columbus Street by contractor Josiah Pope and stonemason Thomas Miller between 1857 and 1860,

at a cost of \$29,600. It was enlarged in 1872 with the addition of matching, symmetrical wings on the north and south facades. In 1877 the Appellate Court began to share the facility with the Supreme Court, and it remained here when the latter body relocated in 1897. The Appellate Court now serves thirty-two counties in the Second Judicial District of Illinois.

The rapid influx of immigrants is reflected in the formation of several denominations, mostly during the 1830s and early 1840s. The Methodist congregation in Ottawa was organized in 1833 under the leadership of Rev. Samuel Beggs, successor to Jesse Walker. Beggs maintained a four-week route that included fifteen other area congregations. At first the congregation met in the now-demolished Mechanic's Hall, prior to constructing its own church on LaSalle Street in 1848. This building was replaced by the current structure in 1866. Receiving a stone veneer in 1911, it is Ottawa's oldest church still in use and is a good example of Gothic Revival architecture.

St. Columba's is the oldest Catholic congregation in the city and the second oldest of any denomination. It was established as a mission to Irish canal workers in 1838, by Father Aloysius Parodi, who came from LaSalle every Sunday to celebrate Mass. The present 1882 church is the fourth on the site, replacing 1841, mid-40s, and 1853 buildings; it received a stone veneer in 1911 but remains an excellent example of Gothic Revival architecture. Accompanying the church is the 1896 rectory, replacement for a similar pre-1875 building on the site. This well-preserved example of the neoclassical style should also be considered for listing on the National Register. The church school, a mid-twentieth-century building, was not surveyed and appears to have minimal architectural and historical significance.

Christ Church Episcopal, originally called the Protestant Episcopal Church, was organized in 1838 by Rev. Samuel Chase. His group met in a number of buildings until 1839, when Chase's departure left it leaderless. In 1845 Bishop Philander Chase reorganized the congregation and its first church, a brick structure at Clinton and Jefferson Streets, was constructed in 1850. When abandoned, the building housed a carriage factory for a number of years; it has since been demolished. The current Episcopal church, another fine example of Gothic Revival architecture, was constructed between 1870 and 1872.

The First Congregational Church was organized in 1839 with thirteen members. The Plymouth Church of Ottawa was organized as a Presbyterian congregation in 1848, reorganized as the Free Congregational Church in 1851, again as the Second Congregational Church in 1857, and as the Plymouth Congregation the next year. In 1870 the First Congregational and Plymouth Churches merged, forming the First Congregational Church with 256 members. The next year the new group dedicated the present Romanesque Revival building on the site of the old Congregational church.

The First Baptist Church was founded in 1841, and first met in Mechanic's Hall. A small frame church was soon constructed on LaSalle and Jefferson Streets; it was replaced by the 1857-61 brick building on Jefferson Street.

The latter was abandoned in 1890 upon completion of a new church.

Located at the junction of the Fox and Illinois rivers, Ottawa was shaped to a great extent by both natural and manmade waterways. The I & M Canal ran on an east-west axis between Superior and Marquette streets. (Actually the canal was adjacent to Fish Street which is no longer extant.) In addition, the Fox River Feeder, also called the Dayton Feeder, entered into the I & M just west of Clinton Street. This waterway, constructed in the 1830s and 1840s, originated on the Fox River at Dayton, some four miles north of Ottawa.

The feeder served two functions, one of which was to maintain sufficient water in the canal during dry periods. The second function was to provide water for Ottawa's Lateral Canal and Hydraulic Basin. The Lateral Canal and Hydraulic Basin, constructed in about 1850, provided transportation and water power for a number of the city's flour mills. Running north-south about one-quarter mile, the Lateral Canal was located between Canal and Fulton streets. It fed into the Hydraulic Basin just below Main Street. The Hydraulic Basin was oriented in an east-west direction and measured 1,000 feet long, 125 feet wide and 10 feet deep. Most of the water from the basin emptied into the Fox River near its junction with the Illinois. At its peak in the 1880s there existed along the basin three flour mills, a box factory, a sash and blind factory, a starch factory, and a brick and tile works (Department of the Interior, Census Office, Reports on the Water-Power of the United States, Part II [Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1887]). The Lateral Canal and Hydraulic Basin remained in place until about the 1930s when both were filled in.

By the 1840s citizens realized that their economy was not going to escalate because of the canal, due to the proximity of other towns nearer to its terminus. Ottawa lost the preeminence achieved a decade earlier, one based on agricultural and industrial exports. Thus, the towns of Streator, Peru and LaSalle became the new "progressive commercial and industrial cities" (O'Byrne). Ottawa did continue to develop significantly and by 1839 more than fifty buildings occupied the north bank of the Illinois River. The premier issue of The Free Trader, Ottawa's first newspaper in May 1840, boasted the type and number of local merchants: dry goods, 11; groceries, 8; blacksmiths, 5; tailors, 3; drugstores, 2; watchmakers, 2. Based on this early prosperity, in 1840 a considerable portion of the county's estimated 1,000 inhabitants must surely have lived in or near Ottawa.

The 1850s were the era of development for the town. Just as nearby canal towns prospered, between 1850 and 1860 Ottawa's population nearly doubled from 3,219 to 6,541 because of the influx of merchants and settlers after completion of the canal in 1848 and the subsequent establishment of nearby railroads. During the 1850s, a number of improvements were made to the town. Additional plats were made, one to the east of the city and one to the north, above the I & M Canal.

The Rock Island Railroad began operating between Chicago and Ottawa in 1853.

The same year, the districts of North and South Ottawa were officially united for the first time. In 1854 construction was initiated on Ottawa's first bridge to span the Illinois River; the next year a bridge was begun that crossed the Fox River. The latter half of the decade also saw establishment of the first police and fire departments, as well as the installation of gas lights.

In 1855 a state mandate prompted Ottawa to replace its early, private schools with a public educational system; within five years each of the city's seven wards had its own school. The earliest such extant building in Ottawa appears to be the Washington School, constructed on Superior Street in 1867. This two-story brick gable-front is without ornamentation, with six-over-six-light double-hung sash windows.

Historic figures and events associated with the Civil War also contributed to Ottawa's significance. Washington Square, the park bounded by Lafayette, Columbus, Jackson and LaSalle Streets, was donated to the town by the Canal Commission in 1854. Here, at 2 p.m. on Aug. 21, 1858, the great debate between Lincoln and Douglas took place. A marker to this effect has been erected in the park, which has also been listed on the National Register as an historic district.

One of the most significant houses in Ottawa is the William Reddick Mansion, once termed "the finest example of Italianate architecture in the state of Illinois" (The Residence of William Reddick..., p.18). This magnificent three-story, stone-trimmed, brick building was constructed between 1856 and 1858 for Reddick, an Irish immigrant who became a wealthy businessman and prominent politician. He was also a philanthropist and, upon his death in 1885, willed his home and a generous endowment to the city for a library. The building and servant's quarters are also part of the Washington Park Historic District.

Multiple-unit dwellings -- the only examples recorded in any of the summer town surveys -- demonstrate the continued importance of Ottawa's downtown during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, increasing land values and causing densely concentrated development. The rowhouses at 716-728 Columbus St. are two-story brick buildings with multiple, decorative bays, brackets and arcades, and are excellent and well-preserved examples of Queen Anne styling. They housed the offices and apartments of Ottawa's young professionals since their construction between 1883 and 1888. The Palmer Apartment House was constructed in 1910-11. It was designed by Jason F. Richardson, Jr., a prominent local architect around the turn of the century. The building is well preserved and shows strong neoclassical influence. Its neighbor, the Palmetto, was constructed in 1926-27 on the site of pre-1875 frame dwellings. It displays the increasingly simple decorative elements of mid-twentieth-century architecture but has been well maintained and features a powerhouse to the rear.

Public improvements occurred as the city became developed. The first trolley

line in Ottawa, among the earliest in the nation, was installed in 1889; two years later the first street was paved, followed shortly by the completion of the first sewage system.

Religious, academic and political institutions continued to be founded during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth. Buildings were erected accordingly, such as those needed to house the smaller Christian denominations. The First Church of Christ Scientist was organized in 1897 and constructed the Lafayette Street building in 1907. This charming neoclassical structure has been well preserved, although used as offices since 1964. The Independent Holiness Church is a very late, modest and somewhat-altered example of Gothic Revival architecture constructed in 1924. From 1924 to 1970 the building housed the First Nazarene Church; it has since been used as the Knights of Columbus Hall. The Salvation Army Citadel was constructed in 1925.

The only proper City Hall that was built in Ottawa stood on Madison Street between Clinton and Fulton Streets until it burned in 1881. From then until 1911, the municipal offices were housed in the fire department building on Clinton Street, followed by a location in the basement of the Clifton Hotel. The City Hall is currently located in the third Ottawa Post Office building at 301 W. Madison Street.

Kentuckian Joseph Cloud was the first postmaster (as well as circuit and county clerk, probate judge and justice of the peace), serving from c.1831-36, when the office was located in South Ottawa. The first building erected for this specific use is one of several stores housed in the Post Office Block at 100 W. Madison Street, serving as such from 1866-82 and again from 1898-1905. A typical three-story commercial plan, it was erected by at least 1866, for a post office occupied this site in 1858, possibly in this same building. During the late 1850s and early 1860s it housed other enterprises such as the printing offices of The Central Illinois Wochenblatt, The Globe, The Ottawa Republican and The Ottawa Free Trader. The Post Office Block burned in 1937. Between 1883 and 1898 the post office was housed in another triple-storefront building, located at 800 LaSalle Street, in tandem with hardware and sewing machine concerns. The third Ottawa Post Office building at 301 W. Madison Street was constructed in 1905-06. A formal one-story stone building with flat roof highlighted by a balustrade and denticulated cornice, it served in this official capacity until 1961. The current Ottawa Post Office is housed at 321 W. Main Street, a non-contributing contemporary brick structure.

Ottawa's growth and development were continuously reinforced by numerous local industries, as well as by the city's position as seat of LaSalle County and the regional supreme court. The diversity of its economy brought the city a stability not enjoyed by neighboring communities. This continuity and strength are reflected in Ottawa's commercial architecture.

Table 5-1

POPULATION CHANGES

City of Ottawa

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Population</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 1840 | 1,000* |
| 1850 | 3,219 |
| 1860 | 6,5412 |
| 1870 | 7,736 |
| 1880 | 7,834 |
| 1890 | 9,985 |
| 1900 | 10,588 |
| 1910 | 9,535 |
| 1920 | 10,816 |
| 1930 | 15,094 |
| 1940 | 16,005 |
| 1950 | 16,957 |
| 1960 | 19,408 |
| 1970 | 18,716 |
| 1980 | 18,166 |

* Noted in various county histories as a minimum figure; in 1831 the county population was 700.

Sources: Illinois, An Atlas. Charles W. Collins (Madison, WI: American
Printing, 1976)
Illinois Fact Book and Historical Almanac. John Clayton.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The city's commercial activity first developed on the north bank of the Illinois River and around the LaSalle County courthouse (located within Main, LaSalle, Madison and Columbus Streets since 1841). The earliest stores were housed in modest frame structures with few details by which to identify their commercial function; only the building at 624 Court Street remains within the downtown. This rectangular, side-gabled, two-story building has been substantially altered, and the north half of the structure removed entirely. Its telltale massing and roofline suggest it may be the oldest structure in downtown Ottawa.

By the late 1840s and 1850s brick began to replace wood as the construction material of choice. Although definitive construction dates are difficult to ascertain, a number of Civil War-era brick structures are extant in the downtown area. Among these are the Bank of Ottawa (601 LaSalle Street), C. M. VanDoren Building (500-502 LaSalle Street), and Post Office Block (100 W. Madison Street). The buildings are simple rectangles with subdued detailing and little stylistic influence; all have been altered to some extent. The Bank of Ottawa housed the city's first financial institution from its construction until 1904. A dry-goods store was located in the VanDoren building until only 1867, when it was sold to William B. Bradford, a local tanner. The Post Office Block housed this government office from at least 1866 until 1882.

Construction in downtown Ottawa appears to have been fast and furious during the late 1860s and 1870s and was most often executed in the Italianate style. The late 1860s Cheever Block (600-610 Court Street), Kneussl Building (215 West Main), and Washington Hotel (219 West Main) are among the earliest and least altered of Ottawa's Italianate buildings. These three-story brick structures are located within one-half block of the county courthouse and Illinois River and feature rows of decoratively trimmed, round arched windows and distinctive rooflines (the first is achieved with brick corbelling, the latter with rarer wooden cornices). The Cheever Block, constructed in 1865 for Silas A. Cheever, has housed a number of businesses, including the gallery of William Emory Bowman, a well-known nineteenth century photographer. The Kneussl Building and Washington Hotel anchor the generally pre-1875 streetscape on the south side of the 200 block of Main Street and form a compatible pair. The former was erected for Maximillian Kneussl, a German immigrant who established a drugstore in Ottawa in 1855. Christian Haeberle owned and managed the Washington Hotel. The buildings in the western half of the 600 block of LaSalle Street appear to have been constructed in the late 1860s, replacing brick versions of the aforementioned 624 Court Street. Most of these simple Italianate-style buildings with bracketed cornices and keystoned hoodmolds, however, were re-faced c. 1915 (except for No. 607).

As the nineteenth century progressed, Ottawa's commercial sector developed up LaSalle Street to rival the courthouse and river areas. Later examples of Italianate architecture appear in the 700 block of the street including the

Opera House Block (Nos. 718-722; only the south half of the building remains), T. Lucey and Brothers Building I (Nos. 707-709), Hoban Grocery (Nos. 715-717), and the Graham and Leix Building (No. 719). All have been altered to some extent but retain distinctive corbelling and/or hoodmolds.

A smattering of other fashionable nineteenth-century architectural styles is represented among the proliferation of Italianate. The Ottawa Republican Building (723-725 LaSalle Street) is a rare local example of Romanesque Revival architecture. It was constructed between 1875 and 1878 to house the offices of a local newspaper and features an elaborate corbelled roofline and pilaster-trimmed, round-arched windows. The Queen Anne style appears only in the modest Reis Building (100 W. Main Street), Clegg Building (231 W. Main Street) and 224-230 West Madison Street. The Reis Building was constructed in 1893 to house the Fox River Meat Market, which was established by Edward L. Armstrong in 1869 but purchased by David Reis two years later; a meat market was located in the building until at least 1913. Justin L. Hamalle's grocery and Fuchs and Gebhardt's boots and shoes store were located in Nos. 224-230 in 1894.

A number of commercial buildings in Ottawa were constructed or re-faced during the first decades of the twentieth century, indicating the continued importance of the downtown as a center for economic activity. The district continued to expand, with one- and two-story brick buildings succeeding frame structures on the north side of the 200 block of West Main Street. Although modest, this streetscape retains much of its historic fabric; especially notable among the structures are No. 208 and No. 212. The former features terra cotta trim, while the details of the latter are articulated in colorful glazed brick. The Porter (115 W. Main Street), Claus (121-123 W. Main) and Schmid (203 W. Main) buildings provide other good examples of early twentieth century architecture in Ottawa.

The well-preserved Nertney Building (116-118 W. Madison Street) is a good example of Renaissance Revival architecture and Ottawa's only representative of this style. It features an elaborate cornice with egg-and-dart motif as well as a cartouche-enriched belt course of terra cotta. With its full pediment supported by Doric columns, the 1904 National City Bank (122 W. Madison) is the only extant neoclassical building in downtown Ottawa. Its founding organization closed during the Great Depression, but another bank moved to the location in 1951. The Gayety Theatre (825 LaSalle Street) is the community's best-preserved early twentieth-century theatre. This c. 1910 building features a pedimented parapet and distinctive terra cotta trim.

The Geiger Building at 613 LaSalle Street is the best preserved of the aforementioned re-faced structures in its block. With its new buff-colored brick face, this c. 1867 structure features decorative soldier-bond coursing, recessed wood-framed doors with flanking display windows and glass-block transoms, as well as a diligently preserved interior with pressed-tin ceilings and oak cabinets. This L-shaped structure is of further interest because of a matching secondary storefront on Main Street.

Ottawa's continued status as a regional center for business is demonstrated by the Classical-influenced Central Life Building (630-632 Columbus Street). This large, five-story brick structure was erected in 1915-16 as home of the Central Life Insurance Company of Illinois. It was designed by Jason F. Richardson, Jr., a prominent Ottawa architect at the turn of the century. Richardson also designed the local Masonic Temple (1910) and Palmer Apartment House (1911-12).

Many hotels were erected to accommodate the great number of people who visited Ottawa on business and legal matters, because prior to every supreme court session "the town would be flooded with judges, lawyers, litigants, etc., and many were seriously inconvenienced to find lodgings" (Burns, p. 10). The 1868 Clifton was Ottawa's premiere hotel throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This Second Empire-style building was demolished in 1929 in untimely anticipation of erecting an even larger structure, but these plans were never realized because of the Great Depression. The Metzger Brothers (616-618 Court Street) and Credon (635 N. Columbus Street) hotels, however, remain downtown. The former, constructed in 1911, has been extensively altered, but the Credon, a five-story, forty-seven room hotel, retains excellent integrity.

As the automobile gained prominence in the twentieth century, a number of related structures were constructed in Ottawa's downtown. Hubert J. Hilliard's Garage, erected in 1910, is the earliest of these buildings. With its bracketed, cast-iron cornice and paired one-over-one-light double-hung sash windows, this structure is similar to its neighbors. The 1925 Reilley's Ford Garage (1025 LaSalle Street) is distinguished by its clay tile construction. The buildings at No. 1012 and 1018-1020 LaSalle Street were constructed in the 1920s to house automobile dealerships, as were the later Poole and Poole Autos (1011 Columbus Street) and Whitmore Chevrolet (814 Clinton Street).

Few commercial buildings were constructed in Ottawa during the Great Depression; with one exception, structures from this period are modest, with few distinctive details. The Daily Republican Times Building is one of only two examples of art moderne architecture in Ottawa. It was constructed in 1939 for the local newspaper, and features curving lines, glass block, and stainless-steel lettering.

Throughout the mid-twentieth century Ottawa was plagued by a number of fires that destroyed a number of prominent, early commercial structures. The 1937 Montgomery Ward building replaced such a victim. This four-story building is a good example of Colonial Revival architecture and does not intrude upon the historic fabric of its neighborhood. The Carson, Pirie, Scott Building (818-22 LaSalle Street) is the newest structure that can be considered contributing. Erected in 1961, this three-story, stucco-faced building features a cornice-like projection, mock arcade and salvaged terra cotta panels, making reference to the details of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century architecture. Recent construction in the downtown has been generally modest and intrusive; a number of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings have also been insensitively re-faced within the last decades.

BUSINESSES IN OTTAWA, 1858 - 1970

| <u>Businesses</u> | <u>1858</u> | <u>1866-</u> <u>1867</u> | <u>1870</u> | <u>1878-</u> <u>1879</u> | <u>1891</u> | <u>1901</u> | <u>1909-</u> <u>1910</u> | <u>1920</u> | <u>1930</u> | <u>1940</u> | <u>1950</u> | <u>1959</u> | <u>1970</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Shoes | 6 | 8 | 26 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 5 | - | - | 5 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| Saloons | 4 | 21 | 41 | 48 | 50 | 31 | 45 | 28 | - | 47 | 34 | 32 | - |
| Dry Goods/ *Department Store | 5 | 16 | 16 | 6 | 7 | 5* | 6* | 5* | 10* | 9* | 9* | 7* | - |
| Groceries | 5 | 34 | 34 | 24 | 34 | 37 | 37 | 41 | 63 | 64 | 47 | 33 | 15 |
| Doctors | 1 | 14 | 20 | 15 | 14 | 21 | 25 | 23 | 20 | 17 | 21 | 26 | 24 |
| Lawyers | 6 | 28 | 31 | 38 | 60 | 52 | 52 | 53 | 49 | 43 | 26 | 36 | 30 |
| Banks | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Butchers | 1 | 5 | 7 | 11 | 17 | 12 | 13 | 11 | 24 | 18 | - | - | - |
| Bakeries | 3 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | - | - | - |
| Hotels/ Boarding Houses | 4 | 6/7 | 10/11 | 8/7 | 4/21 | 9/15 | 6/10 | 6/2 | 13/1 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 5 |

METHODOLOGY

Planning

The historic commercial core of Ottawa was selected for this survey. The survey area, the central core of what was originally North Ottawa, was generally comprised of all of the buildings facing LaSalle and Columbus streets, the major north-south thoroughfares, between the Illinois River on the south and Washington Street on the north, and the east-west streets between.

The survey included a poorly defined National Register Historic District. The Washington Park Historic District is centered on the park bounded by Jackson, LaSalle, Lafayette, and Columbus streets, which was the site of one of the Lincoln-Douglas debates. In addition, several of the more monumental buildings facing this park were included in the designation.

Research

Research was conducted to establish dates of construction and some history of each building. The Ottawa Public Library's local history room features city directories from 1858, 1866-67, 1869-70, 1874-75, 1878-79, 1884, 1891, 1894-95, 1898 and all but a handful of directories from the twentieth century. This exemplifies the comparative wealth of mid-nineteenth-century resources available for researchers of Ottawa, as compared with those available for LaSalle and Marseilles, for example. An 1876 Atlas of LaSalle County and the State of Illinois as well as a county history written a year later also proved useful. Ottawa Old and New, published in 1912 by the Republican Times newspaper, provided a wealth of information on Ottawa's citizens, events and buildings through the turn of the century. A vertical file in this room also contains a variety of written and photographic material about early Ottawa, including a thesis written in 1977 by Edward Vincent Carroll called An Examination of Ottawa, Illinois, 1830-70.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, obtained from the Library of Congress, were available from the years 1875, 1883, 1888, 1891, 1898, 1907, 1913 and 1925. The Sanborn maps not only indicated the presence of buildings in a given lot, but the size, stories and various construction materials. A bird's-eye view of Ottawa made in 1896 was located in the office of Edmund Thornton, chairman of the Ottawa Silica Foundation. A copy also exists in the Library of Congress.

Fieldwork

Two surveyors were assigned to this survey and they proceeded according to the general methodology, outlined above. The survey district was composed of commercial buildings, miscellaneous civic structures, about a dozen churches and only four houses. In general Ottawa's buildings are more

formal and stylistic than those in the other Illinois and Michigan Canal towns surveyed. A total of 118 structures was surveyed.

Finally, the structures were evaluated and categorized using the system explained in the general methodology section above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the rating system developed for the I & M survey (explained in general methodology above), ten buildings were found to qualify as Category I. All Category I buildings should be considered for documentation to HABS/HAER standards, and those that are not already listed on the National Register may be eligible. The Category I buildings in the area of Peru that was surveyed are listed below, and photographs of them follow.

The Ottawa Republican Building, 723-725 LaSalle St. (Ce)
The Daily Republican Times Building, 110 W. Jefferson St. (Cn)
The First United Methodist Church, 100 W. Jefferson St. (He)
St. Columba's Church and Rectory, 122 W. Washington St. (He
and Hm)
716-728 Columbus Street (Se)
William Reddick House, 100 W. Lafayette (Se)*
Christ Church Episcopal, 113 E. Lafayette St. (He)*
Northern Grand Division of the Illinois Supreme Court, 1004
Columbus St. (Pe)*
First Congregational Church, 910 Columbus St. (He)*

* Listed on the National Register as part of the Washington Park Historic District.

All pre-1940 structures in Ottawa should be inventoried. A windshield survey of properties outside the survey area revealed further information about the city's residential development. The predominantly residential East Ottawa features substantial, well maintained examples of most nineteenth- and early twentieth-century architectural styles and should be surveyed comprehensively; similar, high-style houses on the South Bluff also demand consideration. Ottawa Avenue, a wide boulevard lined with trees and grand nineteenth- and early twentieth-century houses, presents itself as a possible historic district. Additionally, a number of late nineteenth-century workers' cottages appear west of the Rock Island and Chicago Railroad line (Walnut Street). These diminutive, gable-front, one-and-one-half-story frame buildings generally feature round attic lights, facade-long porches and/or elaborate, bracketed entrance hoods. The buildings, which number well into the dozens, appear to have been constructed for Ottawa's Irish laborers; some have been altered.

Several religious buildings were noted during the windshield survey of Ottawa. These include St. Francis Catholic Church, an early

twentieth-century example of Gothic Revival architecture. Its congregation was established in 1859 for Ottawa's German-speaking Catholics. St. Patrick's Catholic Church was founded in 1893 because St. Columba's had grown too large; it is also housed in a very good example of Gothic Revival architecture and features significant dependencies. The Zion Evangelical Church is an 1881 Gothic Revival building. Further research should be conducted to determine the full architectural and historical significance of Ottawa's churches.

TABLE 5-2

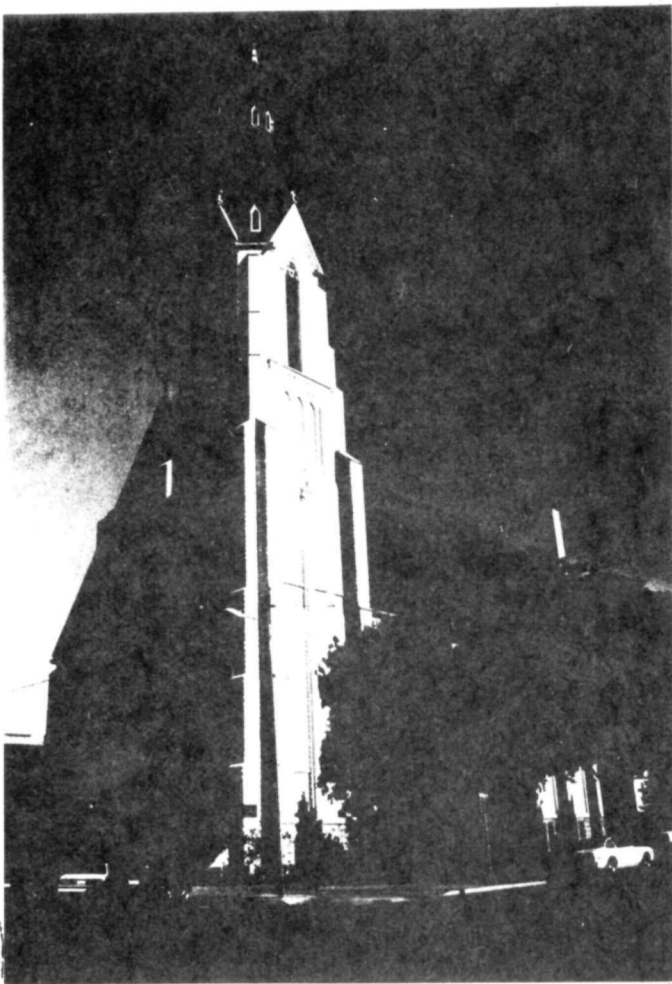
SURVEY RESULTS

Ottawa Survey Area

Construction Dates of Extant Structures

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Commercial</u> | <u>Residential</u> | <u>Public</u> | <u>Religious</u> | <u>Industrial</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1835-1885 | 30 | 4 | 3 | 6 | |
| 1886-1895 | 10 | 1 | | | |
| 1896-1905 | 9 | | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 1906-1915 | 17 | 2 | | 1 | |
| 1916-1925 | 10 | | | 2 | |
| 1926-1940 | 6 | 1 | | | |
| Post-1940 | 12 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 94 | 8 | 5 | 10 | 1 |

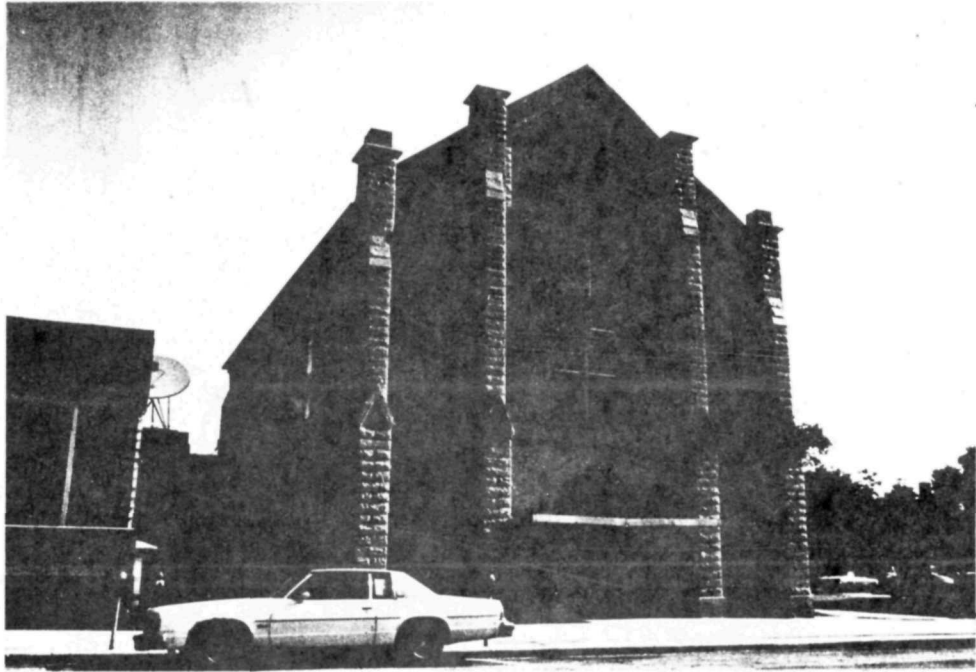
Total number of buildings inventoried: 118



St. Columba Catholic Church
1882
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86



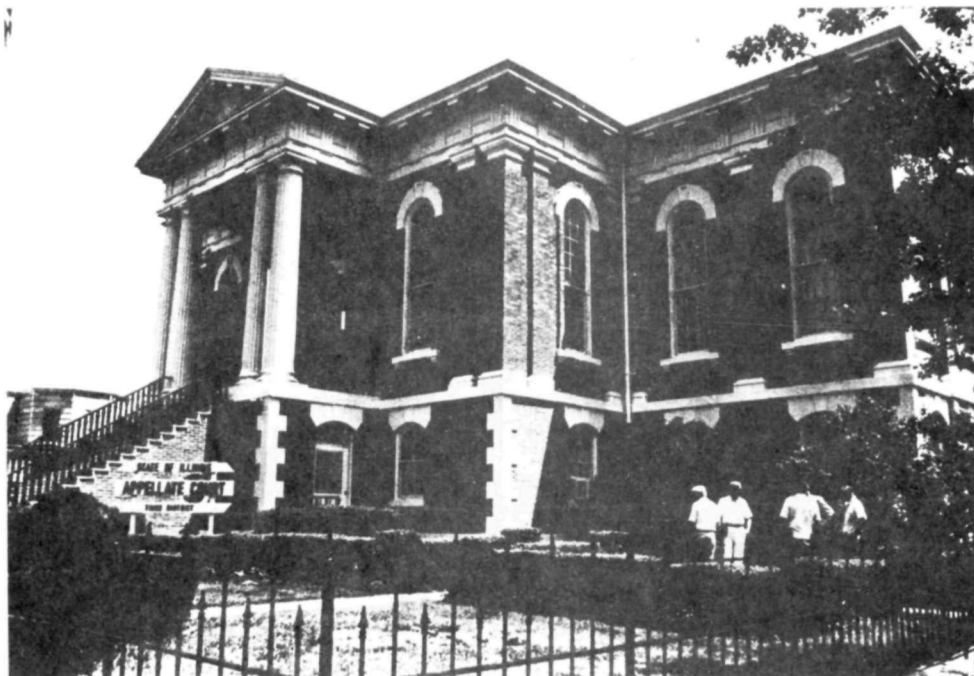
Washington Hotel
circa 1868
Ottaw, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86



First United Methodist Church
1866, 1911
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86

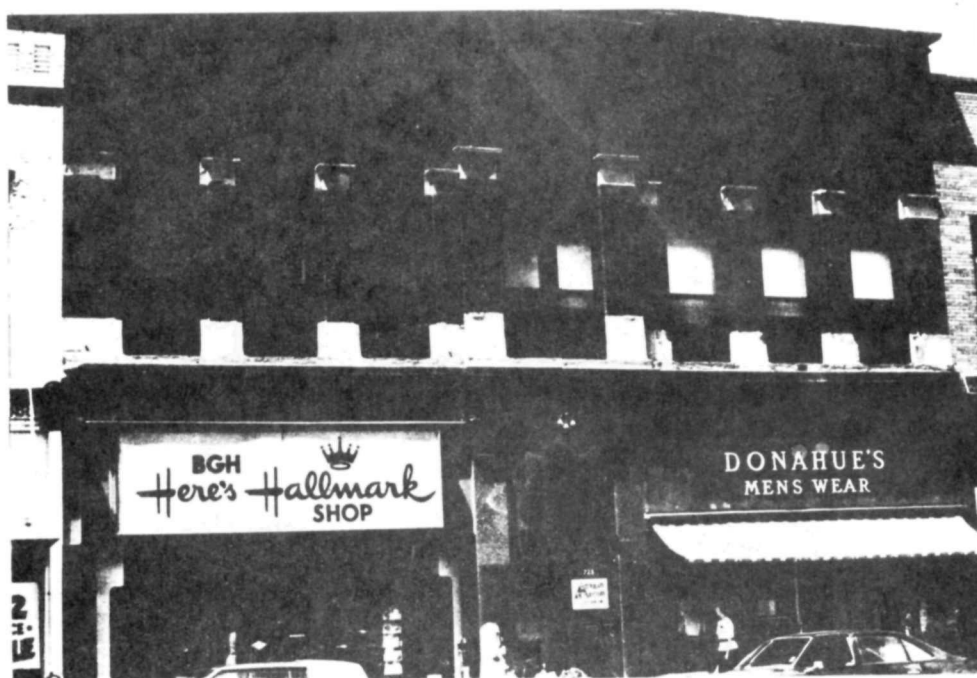
St. Columba's Rectory
1896, 1913
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86





Northern Grand Division of
the Illinois Supreme Court
1857-1860
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86

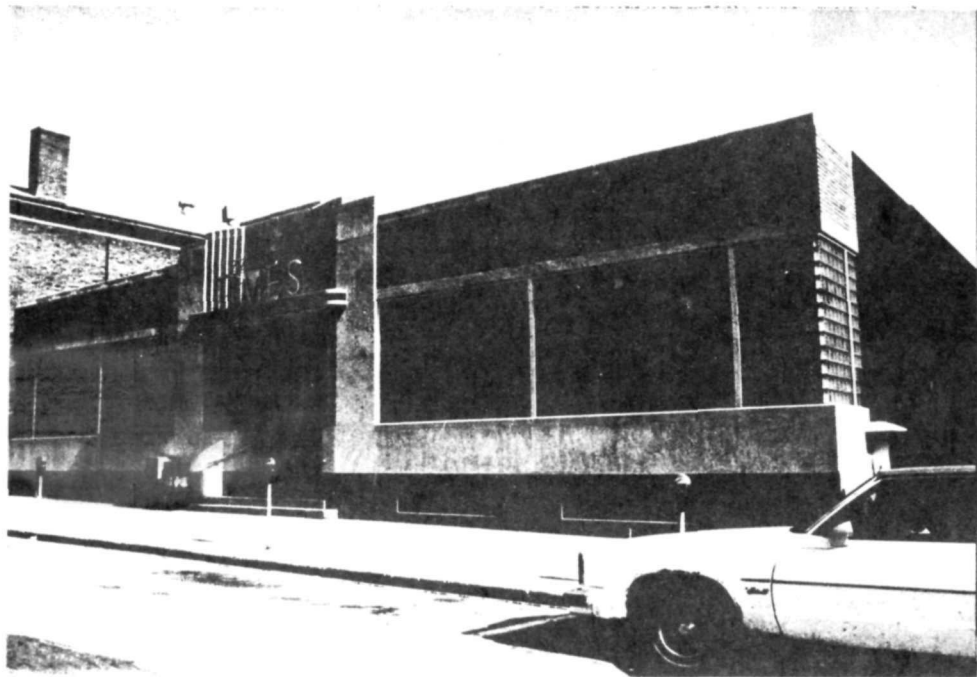
Ottawa Republican Building
circa 1875
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86

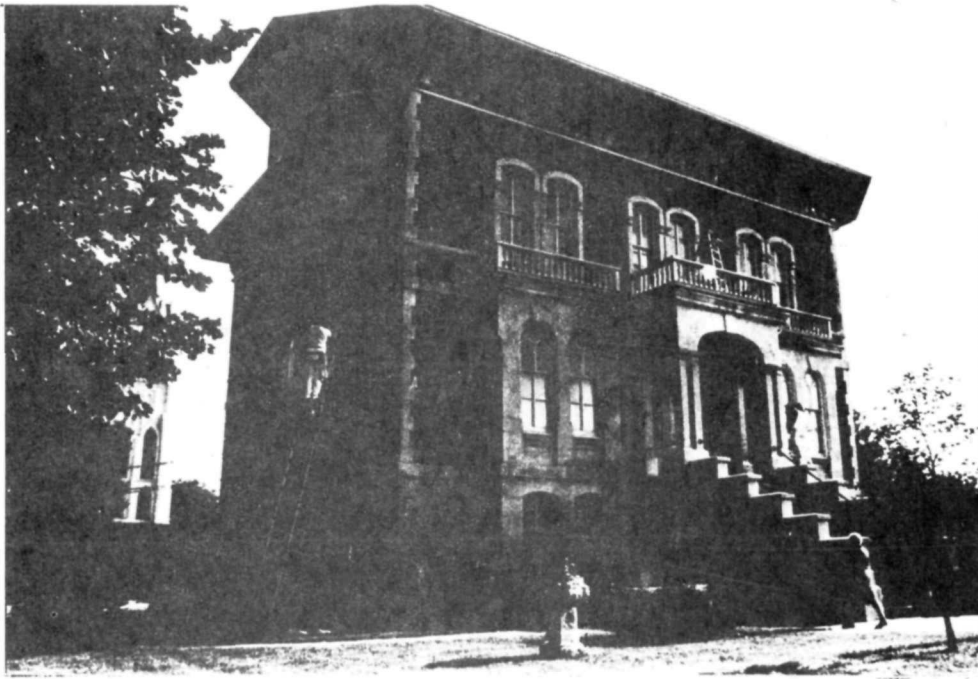




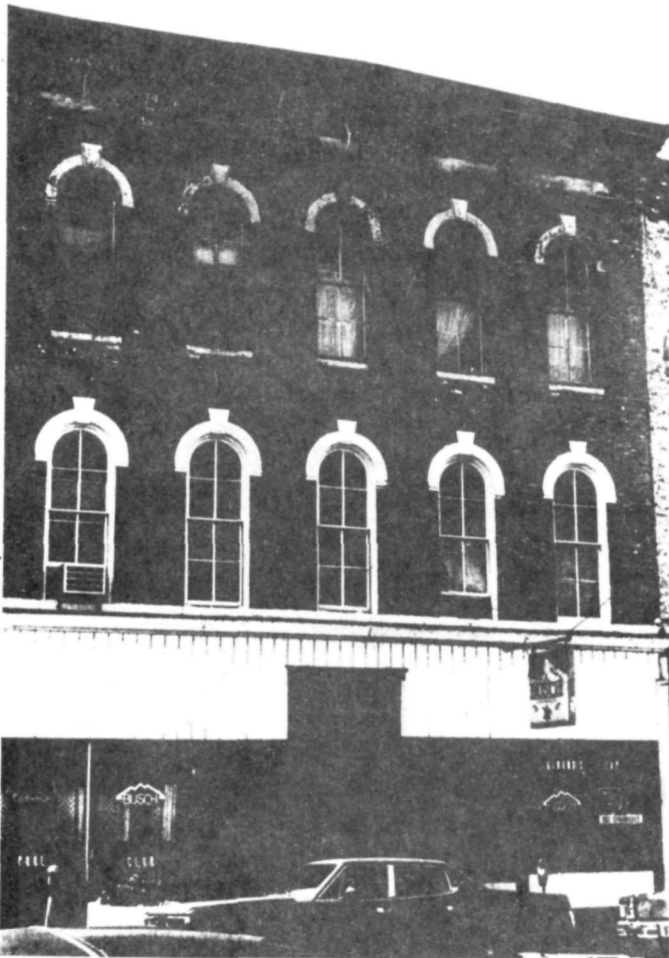
716-728 Columbus Street
1883-1888
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86

Daily Republican Times Building
1939-1940
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86



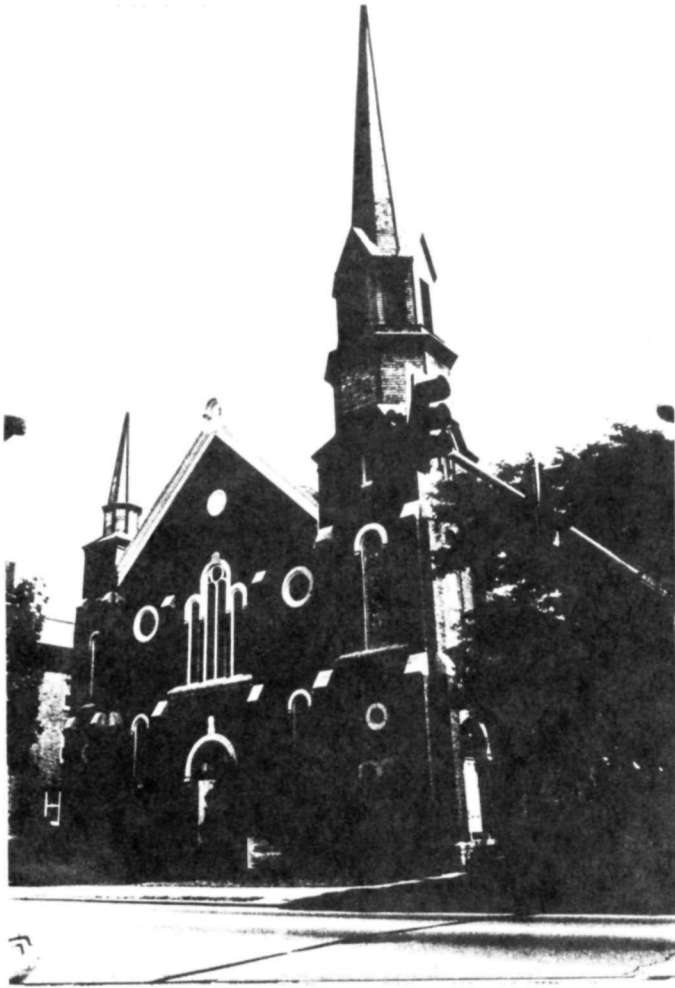


William Reddick House
1856-1858
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86

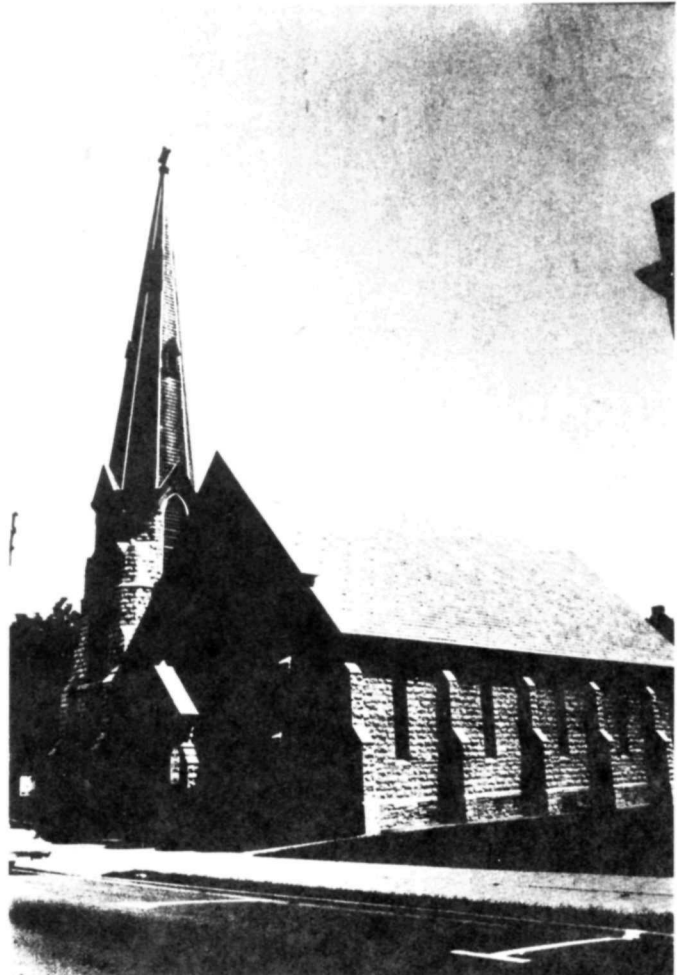


Kneussel Building
late 1860s
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86

First Congregational Church
1870-1871
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86

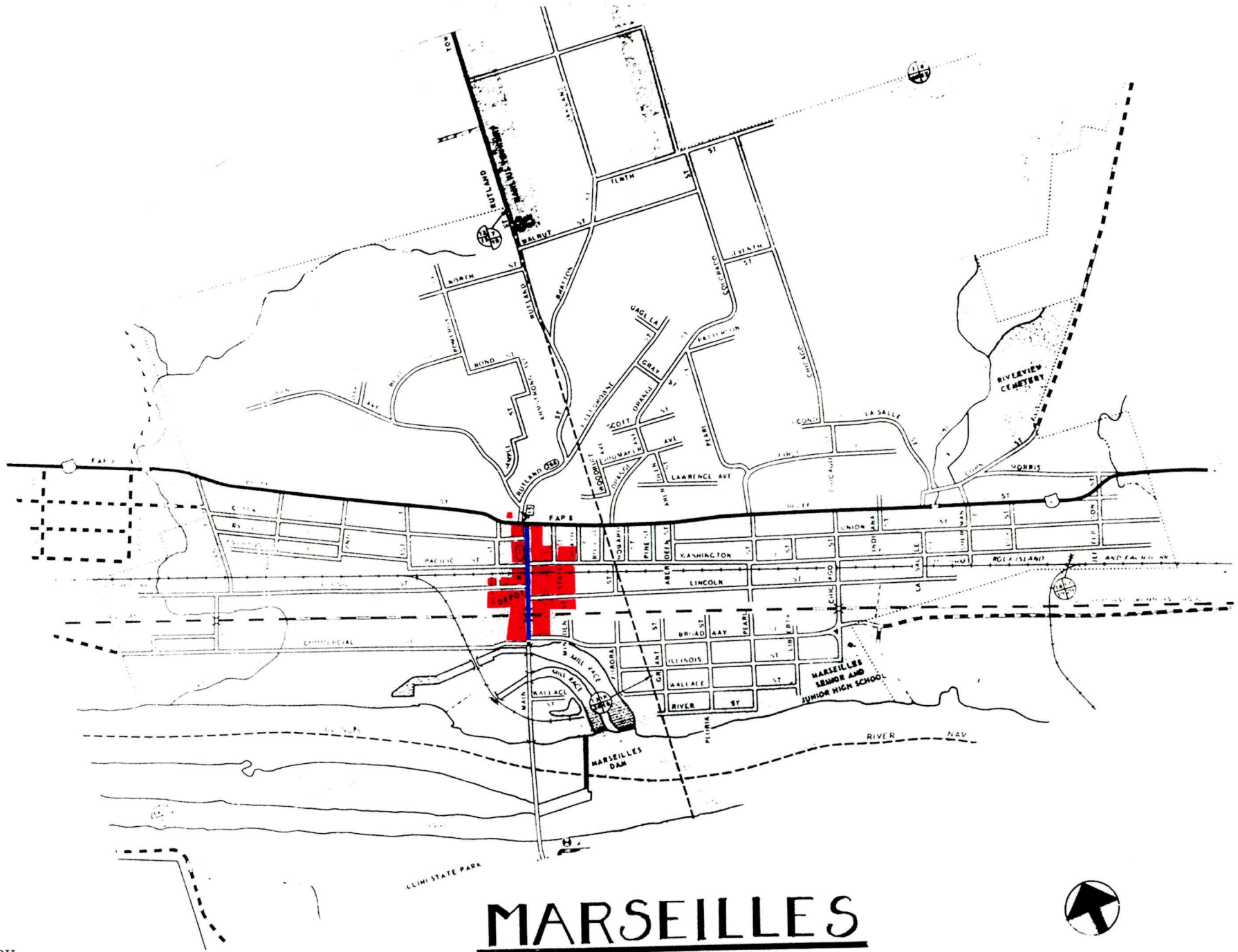


Christ Church Episcopal
1870-1872
Ottawa, Illinois
R. Barber, photographer-8/86



CHAPTER 6

MARSEILLES: OVERVIEW



Key

- Red - All pre-1940 buildings surveyed
- Blue - All buildings surveyed

LOCATION

Marseilles is located in the Illinois River Valley, nearly equidistant from Chicago and Peoria. The town is bounded on the south by the Illinois River and on the north by Bluff Street; in the east section of town land is predominantly occupied by farms, on the west sporadic residential developments continue along Colorado Street to Scott Street and beyond. Main Street, the major north/south thoroughfare perpendicular to the Illinois and Michigan Canal, lies between the canal and river, at the core of the downtown commercial district.

Marseilles is naturally defined on the south by the Illinois River, to the north of which sandstone cliffs form a dramatic bluff. A three-mile long series of rapids highlights the river's path through the ridges of sand, gravel, and clay that form the Marseilles Moraine. The valley formed within the perimeter of the bluffs prompted the town to develop in an elongated form that runs about two miles along the Illinois and Michigan Canal.

SETTLEMENT

The first white settler to Marseilles is believed to have been Pennsylvanian James Galloway who arrived in 1824, bringing his family two years later. His son, George (1828-89), was the first white child born in LaSalle County. In 1831 William Richey erected the first cabin on the west bank of Gum Creek (formerly Richey's Creek) near LaSalle Street and Morris Road. Constructed of hewn logs with a upper loft for sleeping or storage, the cabin evolved into the Buckhorn Tavern because of the many travelers along Morris Road. (The cabin was demolished in 1976.)

Marseilles was founded by Lovell Kimball, who arrived from Watertown, New York, in 1833. He quickly realized Marseilles' potential and purchased most of the land north of the Illinois River. The town was named after Marseilles, France, which Kimball believed was a great manufacturing center, a goal he envisioned for his American counterpart. He had the town platted in June 1835 and named its streets after historic figures and themes, such as Archimedes and Mohican. (When the town was resurveyed in 1865, the names were changed to those in current use.) Kimball also served as Marseilles' first postmaster. His dream that Marseilles become a pivotal industrial and commercial center was shortlived, however, dashed by the Panic of 1837 and subsequent halt to canal construction.

The Marseilles Manufacturing Company (unrelated to the later company of the same name), founded by Gordon S. Hubbard, an original Canal Commissioner, as well as Dr. Robert P. Woodworth, James H. Woodworth, Lovell Kimball and Augustus Butterfield, was the first serious attempt at industrialization. The company hoped to attract immigrant workers to the area, perhaps in the wake of those who had come to work on the canal. A dam, sawmill and gristmill were erected, but a fire in 1842 destroyed part of the complex. After the

insurance company refused to reimburse the company for the loss, it quickly went bankrupt.

Although Kimball planned that commercial development should center around the public square at Grant and Broadway Streets and the blocks north of the river, most growth occurred along Chicago Street on the upper east side of Marseilles, between Lincoln Street and the bluff. After 1845 the town's "East End" was settled by Irish canal laborers near Locks 9 and 10.

With completion of the canal in 1848 and the Rock Island Railroad in 1853, Chicago Street and the east end of town were ripe for commercial development. In addition to the original railroad station, frame buildings housed harness and blacksmith shops, grocery stores and two saloons, as well as the first post office and boarding houses for canal and rail workers. In 1867 all the frame structures on Chicago Street were razed and replaced in brick.

Roderick Clark spearheaded the development of Main Street as Marseilles's new commercial core. Soon after his arrival in 1857, Clark purchased nearly all land west of Main Street and along the track to the east. He gave the Rock Island line fifteen acres near Main Street for the site of a new depot, as well as an option to purchase additional property for a freight yard. (The previous owner, Dr. Daniel Ward, had irritated railroad officials with demands for free lifetime rail passes on the Rock Island and connecting lines in exchange for the same land--thus Clark's cooperative and entrepreneurial offer was timely.) With the new railway station just east of Main Street, merchants quickly moved to the "Clarktown" business center; the pre-eminence of the East End was soon lost and the area became known as "Old Town."

Roderick Clark constructed a dam above the rapids to contain the water used to feed the millraces excavated at the foot of Main Street. With the capacity to generate this saleable energy, manufacturers were attracted to the region; the west end quickly outpaced development elsewhere in Marseilles.

The second Marseilles Manufacturing Company, which produced farm machinery, was the town's first large-scale industry of its type. Founded by Augustus Adams and Sons in 1867, the company was sold to John Deere in 1912. The Pitts Agricultural Works, established on the north side of Commercial Street in 1871, produced threshing machinery. In 1883 Abel and Joshua Moore built a plant along the river that produced nails and small ironworks. The Marseilles Match Factory (1892), located in the southwest part of town, gained notoriety because it was surrounded by company-built housing. The name "Matchtown" remained even after the factory was purchased and closed by Diamond Match Company; shortly after passing into the hands of the Hubbard Furniture Factory, the building burned.

Coal mines and paper mills dominated Marseilles' industry. The first coal mine was sunk by Richard Hughes in 1849 near Richey's Ravine. This 28-inch vein soon provided 150 tons of coal a day and employed eighty men. Crescent Paper Company, later an owner of the mine, and Howe and Davidson, another

paper maker, were served by this coal. National Biscuit Company owned the mine from 1924 to 1928, which closed in the late 1930s. Three paper mills also operated in Marseilles in the late 1860s, as did Osian Stickle's cigar factory. In 1867 Brown and Norton Paper Company erected a 1,000-foot-long dam across the Illinois River, which generated needed industrial energy. J.B. Black established a paper mill the same year. During the 1890s, Crescent Paper Company and Marseilles Wrapping Paper Company, producers of egg cases, folding cartons, and wrapping paper, were important regional industries.

Like Marseilles' divided commercial sector, schools were constructed both in the east and west ends of town. The first school operated after 1835 and was housed in a log cabin in the East End. About 1849 a frame building was erected on Lincoln Street; it later expanded from one to four rooms and was used until 1866. In 1865 a four-room frame structure--called the East End School--was erected at a cost of \$6,000, one of the first benefits of new state laws permitting the use of taxes for education.

The first school in the west end of Marseilles was a private facility headed by Jessie Carson (Mrs. Charles Hobart), who taught about a dozen children during 1864-65. The "Clark Town" school district was established in 1865, directed by Roderick Clark, Al Lowery, Moses Weaver and Isaac Ryall and, in the same year, erected a schoolhouse that housed sixteen pupils. A larger, much-needed brick facility was built a year later; within three years a hall was added to accommodate advanced students. Bluff School, a two-story high school, was constructed in 1873-75 (and connected to the earlier building). A primary school operated about 1886 on Clark Street in a building now used as a residence.

Mary Ann Pickett, widow of a Civil War veteran, purchased Block 10 of the Gum and Harrington Addition for \$100 with the understanding she would found a girl's seminary here. Erected in 1868, the two-story building was "commodious in size, consisting of assembly and recitation rooms, parlors for social events and sleeping rooms. A brick wall leading to the garden was bordered by pine trees" (Marseilles Sesquicentennial, p. 49). The seminary failed because few residents could afford the price of finishing school, and the building was subsequently used by Mary Montgomery as a day school. This enterprise, too, was short-lived, and by late century the structure had been dismantled.

All major religious denominations in Marseilles were established during the 1860s, but no religious structures remain from the nineteenth century. The first church was organized by the Universalists, who arrived from New England and New York state in 1859. Their original church was near the creek at the east end of town, later moved to the north side of Bluff Street near Pine Street. In 1902 a Gothic Revival-style building called the Church of the Good Shepherd was erected on the same site. Declining and dissipating membership in the mid-twentieth century necessitated that the building be sold to the Church of the Nazarene; it was later demolished.

The First Congregational Church was organized in September 1860 with twelve

members, and represents the oldest extant congregation in Marseilles. The earliest gatherings were conducted in the public schoolhouse until a white frame church at Bluff and Rose Streets was built in 1867. A brick church with an asymmetrical tower was erected on the site in 1913, remodeled in 1960 with the addition of a chapel. In 1965 the congregation voted to merge with the Evangelical and Reformed Church, although the First Congregational Church name was retained.

In 1862 St. Joseph's parish was established as a mission of St. Patrick's Catholic Church of Ottawa; it was later attached to parishes in Morris and Seneca, remaining a satellite until 1906. The current 1950 building is a replacement for an early twentieth-century structure destroyed by fire.

In 1862 the Rev. H. Fruechtenicht also began his mission work among German-Lutheran immigrants, forming the Trinity Lutheran Church. Services were held in a building at Washington and Liberty Streets purchased from the Methodists in 1892. A fire destroyed the building in 1961. In May 1892 the German Lutheran Church was founded by the Rev. Jacob Jacobson. Its service was conducted in Norwegian (English was later added) until 1930. In 1901 the congregation changed its name from the Scandinavian Lutheran to the Immanuel Lutheran Church; it is now housed in a contemporary building. The First Baptist and Methodist Churches were also established in the nineteenth century but are located in new buildings.

The first post office in the west end of town was erected surreptitiously (called the Clubhouse, so as not to anger residents of Old Town) in 1868 at Roath and Washington Streets; this building was occupied until 1893. After more than forty years of operating from temporary quarters, the post office was ensconced in a Neoclassical brick building at 100 Washington Street in 1937.

As the twentieth century approached, cultural and civic elements of Marseilles became institutionalized. In 1891 school directors rented the Montgomery School at Chicago and Lincoln Streets to house the primary grades. The next year the structure became vastly overcrowded and the Bakery Building at Chicago and Bluff Streets was rented to accommodate the overflow. Rivalries between east and west Marseilles prevented the establishment of a shared school district until 1893. The construction of Central High School was approved the next year, funded by the issuance of bonds. Currently called McKinley School, the two-story brick building could accommodate 250 students, grades one through twelve; a two-room addition was made in 1901. In 1919 construction of a new high school was approved, now called the McKinley Annex. Together the buildings form the McKinley Attendance Center, an elementary school.

A fire destroyed the original East End School in 1898. The two-story, hip-roofed Lincoln School was erected the same year, and operated until 1919 when it, too, burned. A brick replacement was erected on the site by contractor John Poole; this facility housed grades one through five until it

closed in 1985. In 1936 Marseilles High School moved to a new building on Chicago Street, which was enlarged in 1955 to include the junior high.

After the turn of the century the city of Marseilles received new public buildings as well as an important transportation line, further enhancing and defining the community. The Marseilles Public Library was built in 1905, assisted by a \$10,000 donation from Andrew Carnegie. An addition was given this Renaissance Revival structure on East Bluff Street in 1939. The Ottawa, Marseilles and Morris River interurban line, later known as the Illinois Valley Railway Company, operated from 1904 until 1934.

Table 6-1
MARSEILLES POPULATION STATISTICS

| | |
|------|------|
| 1870 | 758 |
| 1880 | 1882 |
| 1890 | 2210 |
| 1900 | 2559 |
| 1910 | 3291 |
| 1920 | 3391 |
| 1930 | 4292 |
| 1940 | 4455 |

Table 6-2
MARSEILLES COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

| | 1876-77 | 1888 | 1915 | 1925 | 1950 | 1960 |
|---|---------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Agricultural Implements | 1 | 6 | | | | |
| Barbers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | |
| Blacksmiths | 1 | 6 | 2 | 2 | | |
| Bakers | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| Boots & Shoes | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Dry Goods | 3 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| Clothing | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Grocers | 4 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 5 |
| Theaters | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Saloon | | 3 | | | | |
| Contractors (painting, carpentry, cement, plastering) | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 |

COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Few commercial buildings dating from before the 1890s remain in Marseilles. The Brick Block (Chicago and Washington Streets) is the only commercial building in Marseilles that dates from the mid-nineteenth century. This two-story brick structure with five storefronts was constructed in 1867 from bricks made locally by the Coffen family. It is currently being demolished. The building at 128 Lincoln Street was constructed in 1881, housing a paint shop in 1889 and the city hall and jail from 1904 to 1964. Although its first floor has been extensively altered, the structure retains a stepped parapet with decorative brick panels, and four-over-four-light double-hung sash windows with brick hoodmolds. The frame building at 473 Main Street is another of the oldest remaining structures in downtown Marseilles. It was built before 1889, when it served as a millinery and residence; Broadbeck and Clouser Dry Goods and Notions occupied the structure from 1907 or before through the 1920s. It has been altered by the application of stucco, but the recessed central entrance with flanking display windows and clerestory is intact; the structure is one of the few in Marseilles to retain its storefront.

In 1893, a fire, which started in Henry Buszow's bakery and restaurant, ravaged Marseilles' commercial district, destroying eight businesses on the west side of Main Street between Washington and Clark streets. As a result, the majority of Marseilles' commercial structures date from the turn of the century and are constructed in brick. Most are modest one- or two-story buildings with simple ornamentation, that in some cases have been simplified even more by later alterations. Of note is the brick building at the southwest corner of Main and Clark Streets. This brick structure, erected after the 1893 fire, housed a hardware store in 1897; from 1907 to 1913 a clothing store was located here. Feneglio's Electric Appliance Store has operated from the building since 1947. It features a corbel-trimmed roofline and large, double-hung sash with stone lintels and lug sills.

The Shelton Block dominates the southern end of Main Street in Marseilles' downtown. It was constructed c. 1900 and has housed a variety of businesses. The building features a simple cornice and double-hung sash with segmental brick lintels. The large, brick Timmons House (Young Street, west of Main, north side) features segmentally arched windows with brick hoodmolds and concrete lug sills. It was constructed c. 1905 as a boarding house and commercial structure.

Thompson's Hotel was constructed in 1917 and featured nine rooms, a cafe, and barbershop; a third floor with thirteen more rooms was added about 1920. Still serving its original function, the building features a cast-iron cornice, paired windows with one-over-one-light, double-hung sash, and a tiled entrance with flanking display windows. As the twentieth century progressed, commercial architecture in Marseilles became even more modest and unassuming. The Pedroni Building (303 Main Street), one of the best preserved of such structures, features a flat, denticulated pediment and large panel of

mousetoothed brickwork. Its awning-protected central entrance is flanked by large display windows. The building was constructed c. 1925 to house a shoe store. Other well-preserved examples from this period include 329-31 and 485 Main Street.

The Mars Theatre at 500 Main Street was constructed for A.R. Workman in 1936 as a replacement for earlier brick and frame commercial buildings. This modest example of art deco architecture features a stepped pediment and prominent marquee. The H and H Service Station (Bluff Street) is perhaps Marseilles' most architecturally significant commercial building constructed in the twentieth century. Constructed in 1930 for the partnership of Hench and Harrington, it represents the garage-with-bays type of gasoline station. The building also displays some historical influence in its large, Monticello-like, central dome and flanking dome-capped pilasters. It marks the increasing impact of the automobile upon the town's development, as does Maier's Chevrolet Garage (Young Street west of Main). The latter is a well-preserved automobile showroom that dates from c. 1920. The building is distinguished by its stepped pediment and large display windows. The little construction to occur in Marseilles since the Second World War has been intrusive in character.

METHODOLOGY

Planning

The commercial core of Marseilles was selected for this survey. The survey area was predominantly composed of the east and west sides of the Main Street spine, between Chicago Street/Route 6 to the north and Commercial and Broadway streets to the south. The north and south sides of the first block of Young Street, west of Main Street, were also surveyed. East of Main Street, the north side of the first two blocks of Washington Street and both sides of the first block of Lincoln Street were surveyed.

Research

The local history collection of the Marseilles Public Library was useful, although the newspaper clippings file was not indexed and time did not permit the use of this source. The Marseilles Sesquicentennial book was invaluable. John Armstrong, a lifelong Marseilles resident and local historian, was also indispensable. He maintains a newspaper clipping file and a collection of historic photographs.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, obtained from the Library of Congress, were available for the years 1889, 1898, 1907, 1913, and 1929. They indicated not only the presence of buildings on a given lot, but also the size, stories, and construction materials.

Fieldwork

Two surveyors were assigned to this survey and they proceeded according to the general methodology, outlined above. The survey area contained 56 commercial buildings. Finally, the structures were evaluated and categorized using the system explained in the general methodology section above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the rating system developed for the I & M survey (explained in the general methodology above), no buildings were found to qualify as Category I. The brick commercial structures, modest to begin with, suffer noticeably by the application of new storefronts and/or new facades on the upper stories. Although the scale and density of the historic commercial core remains, few buildings reflect their original appearance accurately.

No houses were included in the 1986 survey area, although the number of significant buildings in town suggests that a study of this aspect of Marseilles should be undertaken. Some elegant and formal homes were erected by the founders and leaders of industry in Marseilles from the 1850s on. A cursory windshield survey of town did reveal houses worthy of further investigation. They are:

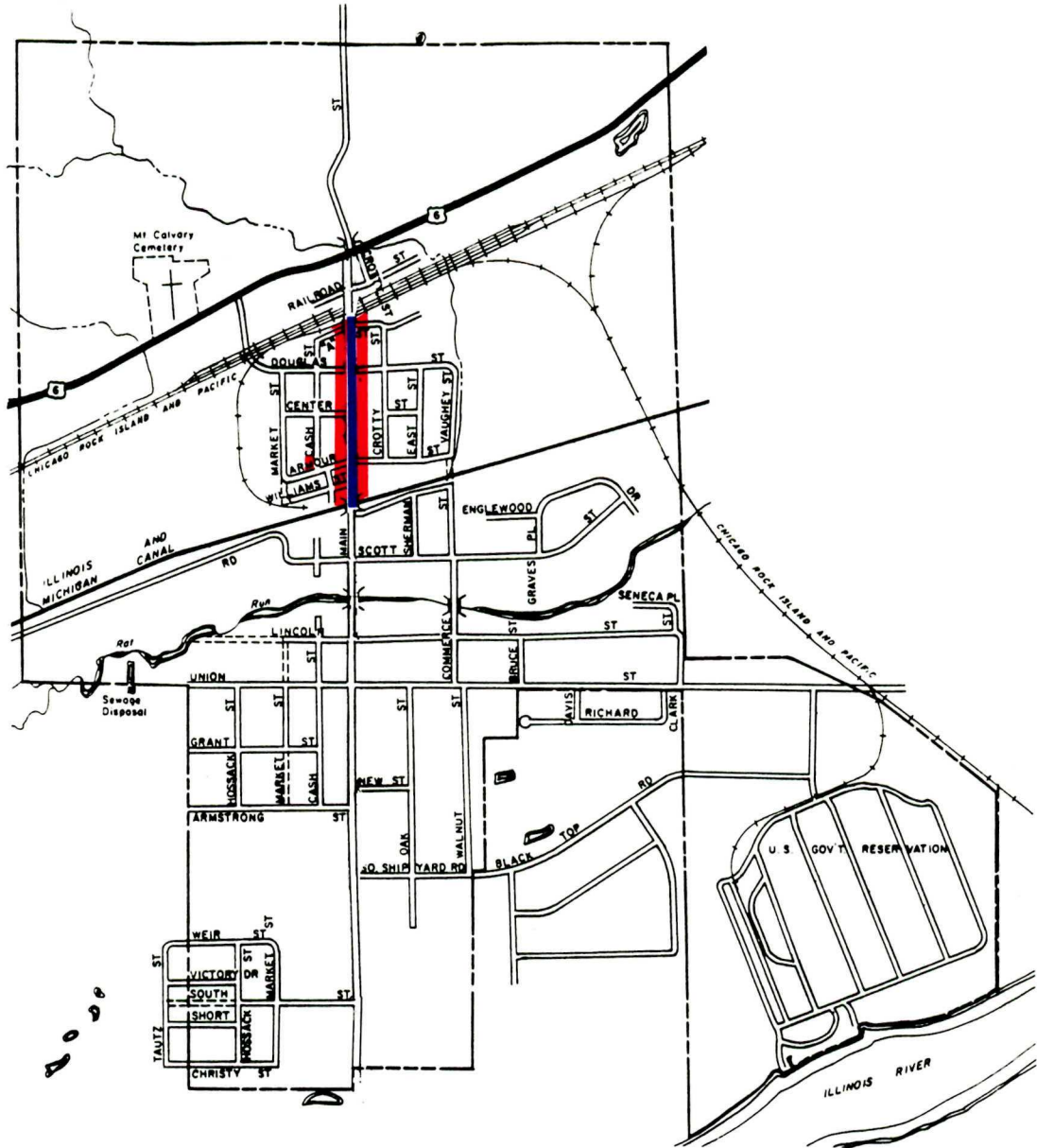
567 E. Bluff Street
527 E. Bluff Street
379 E. Bluff Street
363 E. Bluff Street
269 E. Bluff Street
675 Clark Street
413 Clark Street
347 Clark Street
235 Clark Street
860 Best Street
Jan Johnson house, Sample Street
east side of Sample and Armstrong Streets

A number of houses lie outside the survey area but are significant because of their construction for important local figures; these are also worthy of in-depth study. Eastover, for example, was constructed by Dr. Daniel Ward in 1850. Originally a one-and-one-half story gable-front building with hand-hewn walnut timbers, two wings and a rear addition were added in 1862, and the main block was increased to two stories. It is believed to be the earliest brick house in Marseilles. The Boulders, erected by Roderick Clark about 1869, was designed by D.S. Hopkins, an architect from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Massive boulders distinguish the first story of the house, purchased in an unfinished state in 1902; it was completed to the designs of Ottawa architect Kesson White the same year. Similarly, the 1883 house built by Ryle Trumbo for his daughter at 369 W. Bluff Street is a dramatic Georgian square plan, partially remodeled by Marshall Field & Co. in 1904.

CHAPTER 7

SENECA: OVERVIEW

SENECA



Key

- Red - All pre-1940 buildings surveyed
- Blue - All buildings surveyed

LOCATION

The town of Seneca, located about seventy-five miles southwest of Chicago, occupies a strip of land approximately one and one-half miles long and one mile wide. It is situated in the southeastern corner of Manlius Township, LaSalle County, about one mile west of the Grundy County border.

Most of Seneca lies in a wide valley between the Illinois River to the south and 100-foot bluffs to the north, straddling a section of the Illinois and Michigan Canal. Nestled in the bend of the river, Seneca is surrounded by rich forestland containing a variety of species. The ground is composed of large beds of peat and soft shaly earth.

SETTLEMENT

The origins of the town of Seneca were directly tied to the construction of the Illinois and Michigan Canal in the 1840s and of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad in the early 1950s.

During the late 1830s Abel Sprague had laid claim to land on the north bluffs, the claim was sold, then abandoned. Not until 1848 was the claim taken up and subsequently developed by Jeremiah Crotty (1799-1879), founder of the downtown core and antecedent of Seneca, called "Crotty Town."

Crotty, an Irish immigrant, arrived in Lockport, Illinois, in 1837 when the I & M Canal Commissioners were contracting bids for construction work on the canal. Offering \$6,000 in gold coins as his capital and collateral, he won contracts to build sections totaling twenty miles of the canal between Aux Sable and Ottawa. Crotty proved to be a key figure in the building of the canal, both for his entrepreneurial spirit and his invention of an ox-driven plow to excavate the soft, shaly earth along the canal route. He worked on the canal until 1842 when work was suspended, and again in 1844, until the canal was completed in spring 1848. At that time Crotty made his claim to the land on Seneca's bluff, pre-empting all previous claims. The house he erected there in 1849, built by mason R. Cosgrove and carpenters John Higgins and P. Burk, was the first house constructed in what, by 1852, would become known as Crotty Town.

After his affiliation with the canal, Crotty contracted to build a ninety-mile section of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. Finished in 1852, the rail line constituted the second catalyst for the founding of Seneca; it ran along the foot of the bluffs, adjacent to Crotty's claim. In 1854 a depot was built on the north side of the tracks and the station was named Seneca. Three years later, Crotty surveyed his original claim on the bluff, platted a village, and offered lots priced at \$1 each. By 1860 this village consisted of about fifteen houses and two stores. Crotty made subsequent claims that extended the village south to the Illinois River, and east and west of the original plat on the bluff. Although the railroad station was named Seneca,

the federal government recognized Crotty's original claim by naming the post office, founded in 1863, for Crotty. The community, later the town, was referred to as both Seneca and Crotty until 1957 when the Illinois State Legislature officially designated it as the Town of Seneca.

By 1865 these three activities -- the I & M Canal, Crotty's settlement on the north bluff, and the burgeoning railroad traffic -- helped to establish Seneca as a thriving village. The town, however, was still isolated by a lack of a convenient passage over the Illinois River; hence, merchants and businessmen were unable to compete fully with those in neighboring Morris, Marseilles and Ottawa. In 1865 several local businessmen formed the Seneca Bridge Company and sold 800 shares of stock at \$50 each to finance the construction. The stone and wood bridge--constructed by mason A. Bruce, and Boomer and Company of Chicago--was finished in 1866 and it immediately placed Seneca in a competitive position with neighboring towns for industrial and commercial development.

Commensurate with the rapid formation of the village of Crotty on the north bluff came the early development of the grain industry along the I & M Canal. Grain elevators and warehouses, erected by D. C. Underhill in 1857, Jeremiah Crotty in 1858 and John Armour in 1862, lined the banks of the waterway around the canal bridge. When Graves and Johnson built a large grain elevator near the depot in 1882 -- no doubt to take advantage of the Kankakee and Seneca railroad -- some of the activity shifted to the north part of town around the railroad depot. Terminating at Seneca, this subsidiary rail line allowed merchants a direct route by which to transport grain to Chicago.

Building industries began in Seneca in 1870 with the establishment of Robinson and MacEwen's lumberyard, which covered three acres on the south side of the canal. In 1886 W. A. Graves and Son established a lumber company on the north side of the canal, which still thrives today. In 1880 Frank Goode and Ed Steep established Steep's Tile and Brick Factory, which produced the brick and tile used in many of Seneca's commercial buildings.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the grain, lumber and brick industries, as well as coal mining and stone quarrying companies that were active from the 1880s onward, put Seneca in a strong self-sufficient position in terms of investment capital and building materials. Seneca's most significant growth period was between 1870 and 1890, when the population nearly doubled. During the early twentieth century, although outside industries established themselves in Seneca, the population remained steady and, in some years, even declined.

Residential development within the survey area of Main Street occurred between 1860 and 1890, along the two blocks between the railroad tracks and Center Street. All of these structures are one- or two-story frame cottages of simple Greek or Gothic Revival styling, with gable fronts and clapboard siding. No brick houses were located in the survey area. The larger, two-story dwellings vary in plan, including the ell-plan such as 360 N. Main

Street, with its sun-porch addition; and the cross-rectangle plan of 356 N. Main Street, a simple-but-elegant Gothic cottage. The smaller, one-story houses are generally a variation of the shotgun plan, as found on the austere dwelling at 352 N. Main Street, contrasted with the house at 343 N. Main Street that features a lacy, Gothic-Revival portico and windows with wooden tracery.

Seneca's lone original civic building -- which houses the town hall offices, jail and fire station -- was built about 1880-90 on the northwest corner of Armour and Cash Streets. The pedimented parapet with arched corbel table (on the town hall side of the two adjacent buildings) distinguished the civic function of this structure from its neighbors, but its isolated location off Main Street among industrial structures is curious. The building on William Street that currently houses additional City Hall offices was erected in 1878 as the Jackson Brothers drugstore and bank. It features distinctive red and yellow terra cotta banding along the cornice line of the asymmetrical, two-story brick building.

The post office in Seneca was built about 1913 at 248 N. Main Street next to the canal. Originally only a moderately interesting brick building with decorative parapet, alterations have drastically reduced its integrity. This building served until at least 1939; prior to 1913 the post office was located at the Jacksons' store/bank building on William Street. (Seneca was only a village until 1957, so most of its political and judicial activities came under the auspices of Manlius Township, nearby Marseilles or the city of Ottawa.)

The twentieth century brought large outside industry to Seneca. In 1928 Graselli Powder Works established its Explosives Plant here, near E. I. DuPont; Seneca Works, founded as the manufacturing unit of DuPont's explosives division the same year, employed 250 residents. In 1942, with the advent of World War II, the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company established the Seneca Shipyards on the east edge of town limits in the middle of a cornfield. The building of 157 Landing Ship Tanks between 1942 and 1945 brought 27,000 people into Seneca and surrounding areas during the three-year period of operation. However, although Seneca was a true war boom town, the population explosion proved to be only temporary, for relatively few people remained in the village after war's end. A comparison of the population statistics from 1940 to 1950 reveals an increase of only 200.

Table 7-1
POPULATION TABLE
Town of Seneca

| <u>year</u> | <u>population</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 1870 | 691 |
| 1880* | 738 |
| 1890 | 1,190 |
| 1900 | 1,036 |
| 1910 | 1,005 |
| 1920 | 994 |
| 1930 | 1,185 |
| 1940 | 1,235 |
| 1950** | 1,435 |
| 1960 | 1,719 |
| 1970 | 1,781 |
| 1980 | 2,098 |

Note: Unless otherwise noted, the town was called "Crotty," according to official Census records.

* "Seneca Village"

** After 1950 the town is referred to as "Seneca"

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Although Seneca was already commercially thriving by the early 1860s, the historic architecture extant on Main Street between Canal Street and the canal itself dates from after March 1879 when a fire virtually gutted Seneca's commercial district, destroying nineteen buildings along both sides of Main Street. The fire occurred at a prosperous time, when the town's businesses and its population were burgeoning. Businessmen immediately began to plan the rebuilding of their town with larger -- and more fireproof -- commercial structures. No doubt planning for both efficiency and profit, Goode and Steep founded Steep's Tile and Brick Factory in 1880, thus enabling local merchants to re-establish themselves using the less-perishable Seneca brick and tile.

Although most of Seneca's one-story commercial buildings were altered in the 1960s and 1970s with modern siding and other facade "improvements" such as wooden shingled overhangs, several two-story buildings still retain lively decorative and paneled brickwork with stone and, more often, terra cotta trim and accents at the second-story level.

According to the 1858-59 Directory for LaSalle County, when Crotty platted his claim on the north bluffs and began to sell lots in 1857, he believed this site was "a fine prospect for an extensive town..." and he was "...willing to encourage merchants to come there by giving a number of lots to such as are suited to the wants of the place." By 1860 the village already had a church, schoolhouse and several stores. However, it was not until 1863 that Crotty, deeming the flatland in the valley more readily accessible to the railroad depot at the foot of the bluff and, thus, to potential customers, built a store south of the tracks. He thus established what would become Seneca's commercial and business district along the east and west sides of Main Street.

By 1865 when Crotty was incorporated, the number of the community's commercial and business concerns had escalated. The downtown had grown to encompass eighteen shops and stores, including five dry goods, three grocery and two hardware; one merchant each dealt in furniture, meat, millinery, shoes, smithing, carpentry, harness and copper. Three hotels were in operation: The Hulbert House, Crotty House and Siegel House. In 1866, when Seneca needed its own bank, the village's druggists, the Jackson brothers, opened one on William Street.

At the beginning of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, business activity in Seneca was firmly and prosperously established. In 1877, two years before the fire, there were twenty stores in addition to two hotels, the National and the Beckwith. Traffic into Seneca warranted the replacement of the old wood and stone bridge across the Illinois River with a sturdier iron one the same year. Seneca's first newspaper, The Record, began publication in 1878; concurrently, Holdeman and Leland, who had taken over the Jackson Brothers Bank, erected a bank building (now City Hall) on William Street. The bank was located off the Main Street spine, closer to the grain elevators than the commercial district; its squared plan and awkward, four-bay facade differ

from other three-bay commercial brickfronts that began to line Main Street during the 1880 and '90s. Its decorative polychromed terra cotta and brick detailing would later influence the design of buildings erected in Seneca after the fire, however, for many of these extant structures share decorative traits with the bank building.

The 1879 fire destroyed most of Seneca's business houses. A recent history describes both the fire and the commercial district:

From Underhill's the fire spread on both sides destroying Flickinger's drug store, D.H. Underhill's grocery, the post office, John Wheatten's meat market, Charles Malessa's building on the east and the double building of Abe Holderman. Taylor's hardware store was the first to catch on the east side, then south it spread to H. Bilharze dry goods and grocery and to Nusbaum's bakery and restaurant. Next went to a vacant building owned by Jeremiah Crotty, then Mrs. M. Maxton's millinery store, a vacant store owned by T. Clark, and to D.H. Underhill's building occupied by Miss Katy Hults, milliner; D. Curry, hosemaker and A.J. Lunken's Record office. Then a vacant grain warehouse the south side of the canal caught and was burned to the ground. (Seneca Area Centennial, p.4.)

What could have been viewed as a devastating tragedy proved to be a catalyst for village improvement. An account in 1886, seven years later, viewed the fire's effect as positive:

Both sides of what is now the business street were left in a charred and ruined condition. The loss was estimated at \$50,000. The owners of these buildings were men of push and energy so they immediately went to work and at the present writing that portion of the village over which the angry flames swept is now rebuilt by large handsome brick structures, so that while the fire was undoubtedly a means of great individual loss it has proved a benefit to the village in the end. (History of LaSalle County, p.361.)

The 1880s proved to be a fruitful decade for Seneca. With yet another incoming railway line completed in 1882, the Kankakee and Seneca, and with the village population steadily increasing, commercial building flourished. An 1886 directory lists three hotels: the Clarendon House, National Hotel and Central House. In addition, the village boasted nine saloons and twenty-nine other shops. Buildings such as 256 N. Main Street, which served the various and sundry functions of post office and hardware store, tin shop and meeting hall, display the robust wooden cornice and decorative brick detailing typical of the early commercial Italianate style that predominated among building designs nationwide during the 1880s. Although most of the original ground-level storefronts such as this one have been altered beyond

recognition, the second-floor facades are often untouched and reveal Seneca's original architectural fabric.

In the decade between 1880 and 1890, Seneca's population escalated sharply from 738 to 1,190. An 1896-97 county directory lists forty-nine businesses. Pfeffer's Furniture and Undertaking Business at 304 N. Main Street and the adjacent structure (No. 300), are two variations of the more sophisticated of the commercial brickfront style. The former, home of Seneca's longest-operating business, typically has three rows of slightly recessed panels; at the cornice line is an elaborate version of the more simple one-story panel-brick facades built in Seneca during this decade. This building, with much of its interior intact, is the best-preserved historic commercial structure in Seneca today. The neighboring 300 N. Main Street, with its cornice of decorative brickwork in a diminutive and intricate cross pattern, its second-story pier pilasters on the front and side facades, and polychromed terra cotta and stone accents, harkens back to the William Street bank building; the first floor has been refaced with stucco. Despite this alteration, 300 and 304 N. Main Street form an imposing architectural duo at the corner of Armour Street.

Statistics for 1900 reveal a noticeable decrease in Seneca's population, from 1,190 of a decade before down to 1,036. Although the population would continue to fall steadily over the next two decades, new buildings continued to appear on Main Street between the railroad tracks and the canal. One such structure, 252-1/2 N. Main Street, features a shiny white-glazed brick facade, a departure from the red-brick context of historic Seneca. Completed in 1913 and currently disfigured by a brick-faced alteration at the first-floor level, the upper facade remains clean and severe. This light, streamlined type of styling was just beginning to infiltrate vernacular architecture before World War I.

American Renaissance aesthetics also touched Seneca, as seen in the stone temple-front facade of the State Bank of Seneca at 262 N. Main Street, completed in 1914. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for 1892 through 1939 reveal the same building of brick load-bearing construction in this location. Based on field inspection and the date panel on the tympanum escutcheon, it is evident that this classical facade was built onto the brick building in 1914.

The next major building to appear in Seneca's commercial district was related to the new popularity of the automobile. Clark's Garage, 315 N. Main Street, was built in 1917. Made of dark brown brick, which is unusual in Seneca, and white glazed-tile accents, the garage had a concrete floor, tile walls, steam heat, electric lights and a capacity of fifty-five cars in addition to work areas. The original storefront is intact; however, the building is vacant and seriously deteriorated.

Although Sanborn maps indicate that most of Seneca's one-story commercial structures were erected between 1890 and 1907, most have been remodeled or refaced. The facades of many Main Street buildings have the flat quality of standard brick commercial structures of the 1940s. This may have resulted

from the town's brief World War II boom period; economic prosperity peaked in 1942-45 when 27,000 persons poured into Seneca to build 157 landing-ship tanks for the federal government.

The architectural heritage of Seneca's commercial district dates essentially from the four decades at the turn of the century: 1880 to 1920. Although statistics show a steady increase in population since 1920, virtually no substantial building has occurred in the commercial area since. About 50 percent of the stores in the commercial district are vacant and Seneca's Main Street appears to desperately need both economic and aesthetic revitalization. With the exception of a few scattered stores just south of the canal and a modest two-store "shopping center" located between the canal and the Illinois River, Seneca's daily commercial activity is still concentrated in the commercial area between the tracks and the canal.

METHODOLOGY

Planning

The inventory of Seneca's architecture was limited to the historic commercial core. All structures on Main Street between the railroad tracks on the north and the I & M Canal on the south were surveyed. Fieldwork and research were conducted in a one-week period in July 1986.

Research

The Seneca Public Library has little in the way of resources except the booklet published on the occasion of Seneca's Sesquicentennial in 1965. Libraries in Peru, LaSalle, Marseilles, Ottawa and the LaSalle County Historical Society in Utica have town directories, plat maps and brief histories of Seneca, but in general, resources were frustratingly incomplete. There is no collection of Seneca newspapers and building records before 1950 are non-existent. The single-most important resource for the survey were Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, available for the years 1892, 1898, 1907, 1913, 1924 and 1939.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork was carried out by one surveyor according to the methodology outlined above. The survey area included 46 residential and commercial buildings.

The structures were evaluated and categorized using the system explained in the general methodology section above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the rating system developed for the I & M survey (explained in the general methodology section above), no buildings were found to qualify as Category I. Most of the modest brick commercial buildings have had new storefronts, wood-shingled sloping overhangs, or even more major alterations. Many of the residential buildings, also modest in design, have had new sidings applied. Few of the Main Street buildings maintain their original appearance.

All of the pre-1940 buildings in Seneca should be surveyed, as a broader look at the residential architecture would result in a better understanding of its vernacular forms.

CHAPTER 8
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APPENDIX A

ARCHITECTS IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE SURVEY

Architects Identified Through the Survey

The names of several architects were discovered during the course of research into the histories of LaSalle, Peru, Marseilles, Ottawa, Seneca and Utica. They were listed or advertised in city directories or were found to have designed one or more structures in surveyed towns. The following information on these men was gathered from the Burnham Index, Chicago Institute of Art, a computerized catalog of professionals who worked in Illinois, which in turn was garnered from the state architectural society records and other sources.

| <u>Architect</u> | <u>Dates/Locale</u> | <u>Known Buildings</u> |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Minard Lefevre Beers | 1847-1918: firms Beers, Clay & Dutton, Beers & Beers | misc. Chicago residences and schools; Escanaba (MI) house |
| Benj. Howard Marshall | 1874-1944: firm of Marshall & Fox | presumably as a team: misc. Chicago theaters, houses; Drake Hotel Towers (Chic.); Hotel Kaskaskia (LaSalle, 1915); Nixon Theater (Pittsburgh) |
| Charles Eli Fox | 1870-1926: as above | as above |
| James Alphonse Wetmore | 1863-1940: U.S. Government | Post Offices in Morris and Peru (1932), Greenwich (CT), Syracuse (NY); no Chicago buildings |
| Jason F. Richardson Jr. | 1870-1934 | in Ottawa: Central Life Building (1915-16), Masonic Temple (1910), Shabbona and Washington schools, Palmer Apt. Bldg. (1911-12), misc. residences |
| Victor Andre Matteson | d. 1926 | LaSalle City Hall (c.1905) and Public Library (1906), Gary (Ind) power plant, Saginaw (MI) waterworks |
| Charles Glendale | Chicago | LaSalle Post Office (1915-16) |
| John F. King Jr. | | Peru Central H.S. (now Community Building, 1904) |
| William B. Olmsted | Chicago: partner of P. Nicholson (below) | Reddick Mansion (1856-58), Ottawa |
| Peter A. Nicholson | as above | as above |

| | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| A.H. Ellwood | | Ottawa's Christ Church Episcopal (1870) |
| John Hanifen | 1885-1938, Ottawa | misc. local buildings |
| William Youmans | 204-06 Main St., Ottawa | Ottawa, ca.1888: Western Cottage Organ Factory, misc. residences, churches, hotels |
| Eugene Heberlein | 1885: 904 6th St., LaSalle | |
| F.L.Schueler | 1876: 804 6th St., LaSalle | |
| Alwin Kolm | c.1913-40: 716 1st St., LaSalle | |
| J.W. Watson | Ottawa | |
| Andrew Rosewater | Ottawa | |
| Kesson White | Ottawa | |

